NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE

SCHOOL POLICING PROGRAMS
WHERE WE HAVE BEEN AND WHERE WE NEED TO GO NEXT

Joseph M. McKenna
Anthony Petrosino

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810 Seventh St. N.W.
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Jennifer Scherer, Ph.D.

Acting Director, National Institute of Justice

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Executive Summary

In 2019, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) was directed to provide Congress with a report on the state of school policing in the United States that examined the current role of police in schools and provided recommendations on how they can better serve the needs of students. To address this directive, NIJ engaged two consultants to conduct a comprehensive literature review and examination of data sources, facilitate four days of expert panel discussions, and synthesize the results from these data collection efforts. This report is the result of those efforts. The report focuses exclusively on the United States and on sworn officers and does not consider the use of school police in nations outside the United States or on the employment of private security, retired military, or other types of nonsworn police in schools. Much of the writing of this report occurred in 2020 amid the civil unrest stemming from the murder of George Floyd and the police killings of other people of color. It also was written during the COVID-19 pandemic, which undoubtedly will also have impacts on school policing. This report focuses on what we currently knew at the time of its writing.

History of School Policing in the United States

School policing is believed to have started in Michigan in the 1950s and to have grown, at least in part, due to concerns about safety and security. However, substantial growth in school policing's popularity and implementation is believed to have occurred following the high-casualty shooting that occurred at Columbine High School in 1999. The Clinton, Obama, and Trump administrations provided funding through the U.S. Department of Justice to support local implementation of school policing, largely as a response to school shootings. Nearly all of the commissions and task forces established in 2018 and 2019 after massacres at high schools in Parkland, Florida, and Santa Fe, Texas, recommended more access to school policing as a response.

Despite the growth of school policing, there remains a lack of available data to estimate the true prevalence of police in schools. Nevertheless, we can use the history and emergence of school police in this country to better understand where we are today.

Models of Implementation for Police in Schools

Two common models for school policing have been implemented in the United States. The first is the most common — the school resource officer. This is an officer employed by a local or county law enforcement agency and assigned regularly to the school. The second most common model is where a law enforcement officer is part of a school district's own police force. The way these different models are implemented can vary considerably across jurisdictions, and even across schools in the same district. Despite the popularity of these common approaches, we highlight the need to develop, implement, and test a more comprehensive approach to operating school policing programs aimed at creating promising and best practices for implementation, as opposed to specific and predefined models that lack flexibility. Generally, these implementation practices include governance documents, accountability systems, defined roles, training, and the regular examination of data to assess impact.

Roles and Activities of Police in Schools

We highlight the connection between the history of how school policing programs have developed in this country and the common roles that school police take on under the popular triad concept. This includes serving as a law enforcer, educator, and informal counselor. As we have seen in previous decades, it appears from the literature and those working in the field that the roles of officers are continuing to expand even beyond this triad concept. Further, to place school policing roles and activities in context, we also consider the larger discussion surrounding police roles in the general community. The conflict between the roles of crime fighter and public servant that has long been discussed in policing may be further exacerbated in school policing. Again, as noted, the protests and civil unrest ongoing in this country at the time of writing in 2020 may likely impact the roles of police, including the presence and duties of police in a school setting.

Training for Police in Schools

There is broad consensus that standard police training is inadequate to prepare an officer for working in schools with students and educators. Some states have now mandated a level of additional training for school police, but this varies widely across states, and it is unknown what level of initial training is enough. While the availability of training for school police has improved over the past decade or so, there is still insufficient attention to it. Many jurisdictions make training optional, consider training requirements to be fulfilled with "one-and-done" courses, and undertake little evaluation to identify what training might be most important to mandate. Additionally, there is inadequate attention to apprenticeship for learning the job and to ongoing professional development and training while in the role.

The Impact of School Policing Programs

An examination of systematic reviews and quasi-experiments of school policing, along with expert panel opinions, reveals that the research to date does not support school policing as an effective strategy in increasing safety and security and that school policing is correlated with some harmful effects, such as increased exclusionary punishment in schools. This is not to say that no positive impacts have been reported for school policing, but they are fragmented and inconsistent across the studies. The evidence base is not strong. Although the recent wave of comparison group evaluation studies (quasi-experiments) is more credible in ruling out plausible explanations for findings, no randomized experiments of school policing have been reported. In addition, how school policing is implemented varies substantially from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, and even within schools in the same district, making it difficult to generalize from these studies to jurisdictions more broadly.

Recommendations and Next Steps for School Policing Programs

We offer five main recommendations for continuing to advance the study and implementation of school policing programs in this country:

- Recommendation 1: Dedicate and sustain funding for the study of school policing programs that supports targeted research to improve the existing knowledge base.

- Recommendation 2: Ensure that the most rigorous and appropriate research designs are being used in the study of school policing.

- Recommendation 3: Focus more, in both practice and research, on the selection of officers for school positions.

- Recommendation 4: Provide officers with training specific to working in schools, and to the duties and activities expected of that officer in that school.

- Recommendation 5: Implement and test a consistent set of implementation characteristics for setting up and operating school policing programs.

The decision to adopt, expand, limit, or remove school policing belongs to local communities. Our report provides no mandate, nor should it. However, based on our report, our guidance is for local communities to tread carefully. Without careful thought to officer selection, initial and ongoing training, carefully designed roles for officers and educators, regular communication of those roles to the school community, and periodic monitoring of program implementation, school policing programs may be inadequate at best and harmful at worst.

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Purpose and Background of This Report

On February 15, 2019, in its budget appropriation for the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), Congress directed NIJ to provide a report on the state of school policing in the United States. Specifically, the directive called for NIJ to examine the current role of police in schools and provide recommendations on how they can better serve the needs of students. It also requested that the report include information on the roles and duties of police in schools and their effects on student outcomes, school safety, and crime rates, and an examination of instances of disciplinary actions, including the demographic characteristics of the student and the details and severity of the infraction (House of Representatives, 2019).

To respond to the Congressional directive, NIJ engaged two consultants to conduct a thorough review of the literature, facilitate a discussion with a select group of experts in school policing research and practice,[1] and synthesize the results of these tasks. The meeting participants included researchers, practitioners, and policymakers considered by many as experts in the field of school policing, and the meeting was facilitated by the authors of this report. For a full list of the meeting participants, see Appendix A. This report is the product of those efforts.

From a synthesis of the research literature and these meeting discussions, the consultants, along with NIJ staff, produced this comprehensive report on school policing that includes a detailed review of the following:

■ The history of school policing

■ The various implementation models of school policing programs

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[1]Although the meeting was scheduled to occur in person during July 2020, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic the meeting transitioned to a series of virtual meetings in October 2020.

■ The roles of officers working as school police

■ The training received by officers working in schools

■ The impacts of school policing programs

■ Information gathered from the group of expert researchers and those working in the field

■ Recommendations for moving forward with school policing in the United States

During the drafting of the report in 2020, the United States experienced significant events. First, the police killing of unarmed people of color, especially the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, led to racial tensions and civil unrest across the nation. One major consequence after Floyd's murder has been increased public scrutiny of police and their roles, including, for example, whether police should respond to certain calls for service regarding mentally ill or homeless persons. Discussions in different localities have focused on "defunding," "decentering," or "re-imagining" the role of the police in communities. These events have also led to increased attention to potential biases in how law enforcement agencies police communities and people of color. Schools, and their use of police, have been no exception to these discussions. For example, the concerns that a law enforcement presence in school may lead to increased numbers of young people of color being placed under surveillance, being arrested, and encountering the justice system are a major factor in rethinking school policing. Since May 2020, several school districts have undergone discussions about whether to maintain a police presence in their schools, either contracted or through their own district police department, which have resulted in some local jurisdictions opting to remove or reduce police presence.

Second, with the advent of COVID-19, the world faced the worst pandemic since the early 1900s. Over 600,000 U.S. citizens have died, millions have been infected, and some businesses shut down or moved to virtual environments. Schools have been greatly impacted, with many districts moving to 100% virtual learning and others adopting a hybrid model. Not much is known about how school police have been impacted during the pandemic, what their roles have been in a largely virtual environment, and what has happened to district police officers who cannot be reassigned as school resource officers to municipal police duties. It is yet to be seen how either of these societal factors will influence school policing in the long term, but this report reflects what we currently know.

We kept the focus of this report on the use of police in schools in the United States. Although school policing has been implemented by jurisdictions around the world (e.g., Shaw, 2001), limiting our investigation to the United States provides for consistency in the policy context. As mentioned above, this policy context is changing as we write. We also focused our review on commissioned law enforcement officers working in the schools. We recognize that other types of personnel with responsibility for safety and security are used in schools (e.g., noncommissioned security officers, retired military), but far less is known about the

role of noncommissioned security officers and their impacts. The term *school policing* is used broadly in this report to refer to any model in which commissioned law enforcement officers are assigned to work permanently in a school or set of schools. The terms school resource officer (SRO) and district employed law enforcement officer will be used more specifically throughout the report when referring to explicit ways in which school policing is implemented. Each term will be defined and discussed later in the report, but generally an SRO is a commissioned officer contracted from a local police agency to work in a school or set of schools, while a district employed police officer works specifically for a district in a licensed peace officer capacity.

This report examines the state of school policing from both a research and a practice lens, as both perspectives are critical in moving forward with sensible strategies. These dual lenses of research and practice influence the recommendations for the future of school policing that are provided at the end of the report.

We recognize that there are groups strongly advocating for an end to policing in schools due to the possible harmful and disparate effects, particularly on youth of color. We attempted to balance this view against the reality that many districts continue to employ police in schools, and that the policy context may shift dramatically back toward increased police presence if there are increased safety concerns, such as the heightened fear that comes after a high-casualty event in a school setting.

Federal Investment in School Policing and NIJ Research

The federal government continues to make financial investments in school safety, including those to support school policing and relevant research. Agencies such as the U.S. Department of Education, through its Office of Safe and Supportive Schools (formerly the Office for Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities); the U.S. Department of Justice, through its Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and National Institute of Justice (NIJ); and various other programs and acts of legislation have been focused on school safety for many decades. For example, following the massacre at Marjory Stoneham Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, a partnership between the U.S. Departments of Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, Education, and Justice led to the creation of SchoolSafety.gov, a clearinghouse of best practices for the field.

NIJ has been involved in supporting school safety efforts through the funding of research and its dissemination for several decades, even before launching the Comprehensive School Safety Initiative (CSSI) in 2014, which we discuss in more detail below. In the 1990s, NIJ collaborated with the U.S. Department of Education to examine the most effective uses of security technologies in schools. In addition, NIJ has, throughout the years, hosted various conferences and meetings that bring together experts in school safety to cultivate knowledge on various topics. These broad school safety efforts have naturally included projects and products specific to school policing. For example, NIJ's "Virtual Conference on School Safety: Bridging Research to Practice to Safeguard Our Schools" in February 2021 included two panels on school policing.[2]

Several federal agencies have historically invested funds to support school policing efforts across the country. As of this writing, much of the federal investment in school policing has

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[2] See https://youtu.be/6vDqB-2orF4 and https://youtu.be/yXA2kPsB9fs for recordings of these panels.

come from the COPS Office through its COPS Hiring Program to fund school police officers (75% of salary and benefits for three years, up to $125,000). In addition, the COPS School Violence Prevention Program and the BJA Student, Teachers, and Officers Preventing (STOP) School Violence program fund awards to improve security at schools and on school grounds in the grantee's jurisdiction.

NIJ's CSSI began in 2014 and funded over 90 school safety-related research projects totaling approximately $250 million. The CSSI funds were appropriated by Congress to NIJ as a direct response to the Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre in December 2012. The program aimed to develop knowledge about the root causes of school violence, identify practical strategies for improving school safety, and rigorously evaluate innovative strategies. CSSI was different from most other NIJ grant programs in that it required budget sharing for studies testing school safety interventions to support both program implementation and research. In fact, two-thirds of the funding was mandated to go to the implementation of the program, usually to the educational entity and program developers, with the remaining one-third going to support the research design.

Some of the CSSI-funded projects focused on school policing. These included studies that examined the impact of officer presence in schools, training, police-led alternatives to arrest and other types of exclusionary discipline, frameworks for implementation, and how officers impact staff and students. For a sampling of the studies funded during the four years of CSSI that directly examined aspects of school policing, see the sidebar "School Policing and CSSI." Many more CSSI-funded projects included policing as a part of the larger school safety framework; see Appendix B for a complete list of CSSI projects that examined school policing in some fashion.

The CSSI-funded projects, as well as a body of literature from scholars around the country, have examined the use of police in schools from many different angles with varying conclusions and recommendations. Although many of the NIJ-sponsored studies remain in progress, this report synthesizes what we know currently about school policing and includes new findings from the CSSI-funded studies that are available. It is only through summarizing that available research, and listening to those working in the field, that we can offer both evidence-based and practical recommendations about policing in schools moving forward.

School Policing and CSSI

NIJ's Comprehensive School Safety Initiative (CSSI) funded numerous projects relevant to understanding school policing. Some of those projects, in order of year of award, are:

2017

- Enhancing School Resource Officers Effectiveness Through Online Professional and Job Embedded Coaching https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/awards/2017-ck-bx-0019

- Evaluating Impacts of the Philadelphia Police School Diversion Program: An Alternative to Arrest Policing Strategy https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/awards/2017-ck-bx-0001

- Evaluating Promising School Staff and Resource-Officer Approaches for Reducing Harsh Discipline, Suspension, and Arrests https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/awards/2017-ck-bx-0014

2016

- A Randomized Controlled Trial of a Comprehensive, Research-Based Framework for Implementing School-Based Law Enforcement Programs https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/awards/2016-ck-bx-0003

- School Climate, Student Discipline, and the Implementation of School Resource Officers https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/awards/2016-ck-bx-0017

- The Influence of Subjective and Objective Rural School Security on Law Enforcement Engagement Models: A Mixed Methods Study https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/awards/2016-ck-bx-0019

- Understanding the Adoption, Function, and Consequences of School Resource Officer Use in Understudied Settings https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/awards/2016-ck-bx-0020

2014

- A Comprehensive Study of the Presence of Police in Schools https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/awards/2014-ck-bx-0006

- Effective School Staff Interactions with Students and Police: A Training Model https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/awards/2014-ck-bx-0003

- Survey of Law Enforcement Personnel in Schools https://bjs.ojp.gov/funding/awards/2014-ck-bx-k044

For a complete list of CSSI projects that examine school policing, see Appendix B.

History of School Policing in the United States

This section's review of school policing history examines why and how school policing came into use in educational environments across the country. This look at school policing's origins provides necessary context for better understanding the issues we must work through today. This section of the report highlights how school policing has evolved, describing the path from its first use to its wide-scale expansion across the country.

The Use of Dedicated Police in Schools

Although police in some fashion have always patrolled U.S. schools and responded to calls for service coming from a school, this report focuses on police who are assigned and dedicated to a specific school or set of schools. It is commonly recognized that the first school policing program was implemented in the late 1950s in Flint, Michigan. The city's Police-School Liaison Program was the result of a shift in traditional policing attitudes toward an approach centered on more proactive crime prevention (see generally: Coon & Travis, 2012; Cray & Weiler, 2011; Patterson, 2007; Weiler & Cray, 2011). The goal of this early program was to use full-time police officers in the school to act as a deterrent and prevent crime before it happened. Initially, the program was only used in middle schools, but it was later expanded into high schools after school administrators concluded that the program was an overwhelming success. To our knowledge, success appeared to be judged by these administrators solely on satisfaction by those involved in the program, as no evaluation was conducted. Not long after, school districts in Florida, Arizona, Minnesota, and North Carolina began similar programs (Patterson, 2007).

The use of full-time police in schools continued to grow over the next several decades. Another major development in the history of school policing came when a police chief in Florida was credited with using the title school resource officers (SROs) for officers placed in schools (Coon & Travis, 2012; Weiler & Cray, 2011). Since then, in both research and

practice, SRO has become the predominant term by which officers working in schools are referenced. Definitions of an SRO vary to some degree, but almost all suggest the following: (1) the officer is a sworn, licensed officer in the state, (2) the officer is employed by a local law enforcement agency, (3) the officer is assigned to the school district permanently (whether to one campus or several), and (4) the officer's main function is to increase safety and security. Therefore, for the purpose of this report, an SRO is defined as:

> A sworn peace officer who is employed by the local or county law enforcement agency with the goal of increasing safety and security for the school district or campus (Coon & Travis, 2012; Weiler & Cray, 2012).

The Expansion of School Police With School-Based Training Programs

As the use of officers in schools continued to grow, another turning point in the history of school policing was the introduction and widespread expansion of school-based prevention programs, such as Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.). The D.A.R.E. program, and others like it, were aimed at preventing students from using drugs and engaging in criminal behaviors (DeJong, 1987; Rosenbaum et al., 1994; Sigler & Talley, 1995). School-based drug prevention programs proliferated because of the federal Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, which was passed in 1986.

D.A.R.E. was initially launched as a partnership between the Los Angeles Police Department and the Los Angeles Unified School District (DeJong, 1987; Rosenbaum et al., 1994; Sigler & Talley, 1995). The program consisted of one-hour classroom-based lessons that were delivered to fifth and sixth grade students by a law enforcement officer during the school day (DeJong, 1987). This likely fueled the growth of officers working in schools and school policing programs around the country. Although empirical evidence of the D.A.R.E. program's effectiveness has been called into question, programs such as this demonstrated a greater acceptance by schools, police, and the community for law enforcement to be involved in schools.

Like D.A.R.E., gang prevention programs such as Gang Resistance Education And Training (G.R.E.A.T.) were increasingly implemented in schools. The G.R.E.A.T. program was developed in 1991 to reduce gang activity by having police officers teach middle school students life skills. This program grew exponentially in the 1990s following its initial collaboration between the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; and the Phoenix Police Department. Advocates pushed for the program to be adopted nationwide.

The G.R.E.A.T. program was administered through 13 lessons at the middle school level and six lessons for elementary school students; it has been administered to more than six million students since its inception. Although the empirical evidence initially showed positive effects for students who completed the program, it did not necessarily show a reduction in the number of students who joined gangs (Esbensen et al., 2012). However, later revisions to the program and subsequent evaluations indicated significant decreases in students joining gangs (Esbensen et al., 2012). Like D.A.R.E., G.R.E.A.T. signaled a growing willingness on the part of educators and community leaders to have police in schools interacting directly with young persons.

Federal Support and the Growth of Community Oriented Policing

Federal legislation to control crime also led, indirectly, to funding for school policing in the 1990s. In 1994, the Public Safety Partnership and Community Policing Act (42 U.S.C. § 3796dd) and the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act (H.R. 3355, Public Law 103-322) were signed into law. The latter of the two acts would create the COPS Office, which has been responsible for distributing almost $8 billion to reduce violence in the United States. Eventually, the office was also tasked with the implementation of school policing programs (Coon & Travis, 2012) to support community-oriented efforts and prevent crime.

The COPS Office immediately funded the addition of over 6,500 police in schools across the country under its COPS in Schools program (Patterson, 2007). This program aimed to add officers to schools by funding them for up to three years and requiring that they engage in community policing activities. Although this initiative was last funded in 2005, the COPS Office has continued, under various initiatives, to fund and support the addition of police in schools.

Other initiatives funded by the COPS Office that either directly or more broadly supported hiring police in schools (Na & Gottfredson, 2013; Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2014) include:

■   Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative

■   Gang Reduction Project (in collaboration with the Office of Justice Programs)

■   COPS Hiring Program

■   Safe School Initiative

■   Secure Our Schools

■   School Violence Prevention Program

The creation of the COPS Office, which became a primary funder and supporter of school police, coincided with the passing of the Safe Schools Act of 1994 (20 U.S.C. § 5961). This act allowed school officials to use a portion of federal funds for school safety and security, including police services, as part of a broader legislative effort aimed at curbing violence and drug use in American schools. Collectively, these pieces of federal legislation gave schools concerned about safety the financial resources to bring police onto campus.

School Violence and Columbine High School

The mass shooting at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, in 1999 resulted in 15 fatalities (including the two shooters). This shooting came on the heels of multiple-casualty shootings in other schools (e.g., West Paducah, Kentucky; Jonesboro, Arkansas; Springfield, Oregon; and Pearl, Mississippi), adding to the general perception that youth violence was a major social problem and that something needed to be done to curb youth crime and drug use. Official crime statistics appeared to confirm this belief. For instance:

■ The percentage of homicides involving juveniles increased from 10% of all homicides in 1965 to 15% in 1994 (Cook & Laub, 1998).

■ From 1985 to 1994, the rate of murders committed by teenagers (ages 14-17) increased 172% (Fox, 1996).

■ Between 1989 and 1994, Uniform Crime Report data indicate that juveniles ages 13-18 made up 8% of the United States population, yet they accounted for 20% of individuals who were arrested for crimes (Bernard, 1999).

Although concern was directed to the safety of the general community, schools became an extension of this concern because that is where many juveniles spend much of their day. However, it was not until the 1990s that data were uniformly collected related to crimes and violence that specifically occurred in schools. Considering that perceptions of youth violence likely fueled the use and growth of school policing programs, a brief review of crime and violence in schools since the 1990s is warranted.

According to the *Indicators of School Crime and Safety* report, there has been a decrease since the 1990s in most respects regarding school crime (see Figure 1).[3] From 1999 to 2006, the total number of crimes in American schools fluctuated from 2.1 million to 2.3 million; however, the rate remained stable at 46 crimes per 1,000 students (DeVoe et al., 2005; Dinkes et al., 2006; Dinkes, Cataldi, & Lin-Kelly, 2007). Beginning in the 2007-2008 school year, the total number of crimes decreased to 2 million and the rate to 43 crimes per 1,000 students (Robers, Zhang, & Truman, 2010). This trend continued into the 2009-2010 school year, with the rate dropping to 40 crimes per 1,000 students (Robers et al., 2014). Crimes in schools continued to decrease to about 1.4 million (28 per 1,000 students) in the 2015-2016 school year (Musu et al., 2019). This downward trend ended during the 2017-2018 school year; although the number of crimes remained consistent at 1.4 million, the rate increased slightly to 29 incidents per 1,000 students (Wang et al., 2020).

The trend of decreasing crime at school included violent crime. For instance, the total number of schools reporting a violent crime[4] decreased from 71% during the 1999-2000 school year to 65% during the 2013-2014 school year. This included a decrease in serious violent crimes:[5] The number of schools reporting at least one serious violent incident dropped from 20% in 1999-2000 to a low of 13% during the 2013-2014 school year. The last two years of available data, however, indicate an increase in this indicator. During the 2015-2016 school year, approximately 69% of schools reported at least one violent crime, with 15% reporting at least one serious incident (Musu et al., 2019). These levels further increased to 71% of schools reporting at least one violent crime and 21% reporting at least one serious incident during the 2017-2018 academic year (Wang et al., 2020).

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[3]In the *Indicators of School Crime and Safety* report, the following crimes are included: rape; sexual assault other than rape; physical attack or fight with or without a weapon; threat of physical attack with or without a weapon; robbery with or without a weapon; possession of a firearm or explosive device; possession of a knife or sharp object; distribution, possession, or use of illegal drugs or alcohol; inappropriate distribution, possession, or use of prescription drugs; and vandalism.

[4]In the *Indicators of School Crime and Safety* report, violent crime includes rape, sexual assault other than rape, physical attack or fight with or without a weapon, threat of physical attack with or without a weapon, and robbery with or without a weapon.

[5]Serious violent crimes included all of those listed in note 1 above, except for physical attacks or fights without a weapon and threat of physical attacks without a weapon.

Figure 1. Crime rate in school per 1,000 students 1999-2018
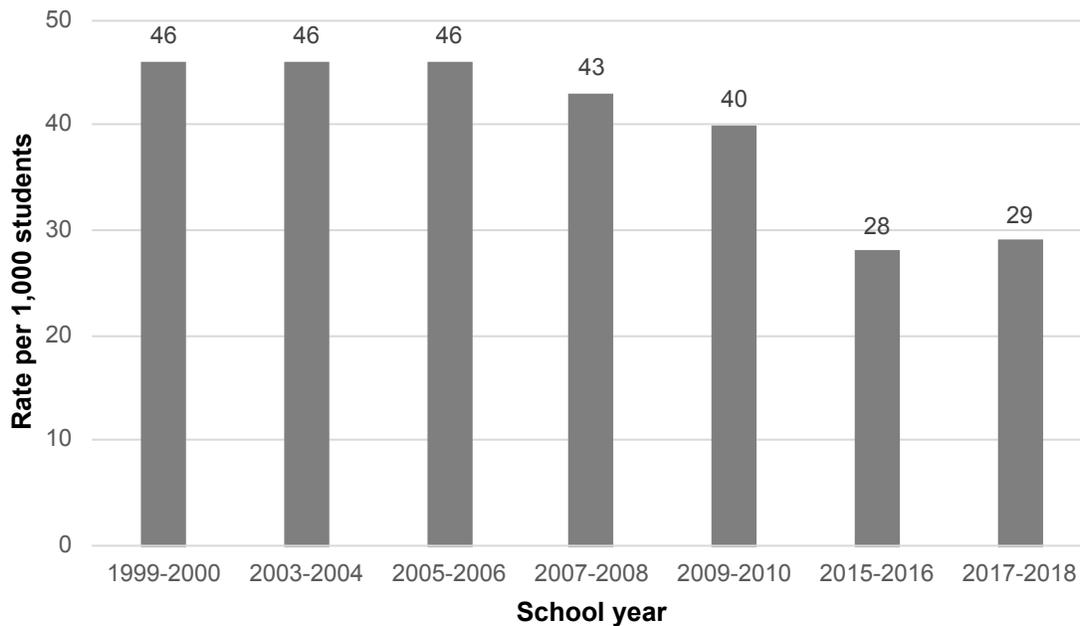
Other indicators routinely reported by the federal government related to crime and violence in schools include gang activity, weapon carrying, fighting, and drug/alcohol use. Regardless of which indicator is tracked, all have decreased over time from the 1990s to the latest data collection.

Although minor crimes are more frequent, it is the major school crime incidents, such as active or mass shooter events, that get the most attention. Major violent incidents involving high numbers of student and staff casualties (e.g., Columbine, Sandy Hook, Parkland) are major drivers in policy change and often serve as the impetus for changing safety procedures, including the use of police in schools (Petrosino, Boal, & Mays, 2018). Mirroring the data on mass shootings in general, school homicide incidents with multiple victims increased from 2009 through the 2017-2018 school year, after a decline during the preceding period from 1994 to 2009 (Musu et al., 2019).

The Columbine High School massacre was a significant event in the history of school safety, including the evolution of school policing. On April 20, 1999, in Littleton, Colorado, two students entered Columbine High School armed with high-powered firearms and explosive devices. The two gunmen killed 12 students and one teacher, and injured 21 others before killing themselves (Hong et al., 2001). In response to this event, policymakers, government officials, and the public focused their attention on issues of school violence and possible prevention efforts. One common recommendation was the use of permanently stationed police in schools (Coon & Travis, 2012). Since the events at Columbine High School, several other high-casualty events have occurred in U.S. schools (i.e., in Newtown, Connecticut; Parkland, Florida; and Santa Fe, Texas). After each of these mass violence incidents, there

has been a consistent recommendation to increase access to permanently stationed police in schools as a safety measure. The Clinton, Obama, and Trump administrations provided federal grant programs to support the implementation of school policing for safety reasons. Many school safety task forces and commissions established after the Parkland massacre in 2018 recommended greater presence of police in schools, including the Federal Commission on School Safety (Federal Commission on School Safety, 2018; Mullin, 2018).

Prevalence of Police in Schools and Data Sources

Although there is a general sense that the use of full-time police in schools has increased over time, a clear and reliable data source to substantiate this is elusive (James & McCallion, 2013). To our knowledge, school police — whether contracted SROs or part of a commissioned department through the school district — are not required to register their information to be retained by any state or national databases. In most states, as with any police agency, school-run police departments are required to apply for and receive some form of state credentialing. In some cases, the number of officers is reported, but this is not consistent across states. Therefore, the true number of officers permanently assigned to schools across the United States is unknown.

At best, we can piece together various reports over time to gauge the number of officers in schools. For instance, after the first reported occurrence of full-time police in schools in Michigan in the 1950s, there were only about 20 school districts nationwide that used school police in some capacity (Coon & Travis, 2012). In the early 2000s, the Bureau of Justice Statistics' Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics survey[6] became the main data source used to estimate the number of law enforcement officers working in the school environment (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014).

According to this survey, the number of SROs peaked in 2003 at approximately 20,000 officers working in schools. This number remained relatively consistent through 2007, at which point it began to decrease slightly. Unfortunately, this survey was discontinued in 2007, leaving a void in the ability to estimate the number of law enforcement officers currently working in the school environment. Additionally, this survey only accounted for SROs who were contracted from local agencies to work in schools and did not capture the school districts that had their own departments and officers.

Media reports from 2009 estimate that the number of sworn law enforcement officers working in schools was greater than 17,000 (*New York Times,* 2009). Other sources, such as the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO), have also attempted to estimate the number of officers working in U.S. schools using their membership data. Based on a review of the national data and its own membership information, NASRO estimates that there are now between 14,000 and 20,000 officers assigned to schools nationwide (NASRO, 2021a).

Others have also attempted to use student or educator data to estimate how many schools or districts use police. For instance, Kim and Geronimo (2010) reported that approximately

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[6]The Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics survey, known by the acronym LEMAS, collects data from a nationally representative sample of state, county, and local law enforcement agencies in the United States.

60% of high school students in the early 2000s reported the presence of law enforcement officers in their schools. The 2019 *Indicators of School Crime and Safety* (Musu et al., 2019) report showed that according to principal self-reports, 42% of public schools had at least one SRO present at least one day a week during the 2015-2016 academic year. However, the number of schools or districts using police does not allow for an estimate of the number of officers being used. Some schools may have multiple officers assigned, while others may share one officer among them.

The National Institute of Justice, through its Comprehensive School Safety Initiative, has funded the development of the Survey of Law Enforcement Personnel in Schools to, among other aims, provide a consistent and reliable measure of the prevalence of police in schools. Additionally, in October 2020, the U.S. Department of Education released the 2017-2018 Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC), which included a question to schools regarding the number of full-time sworn law enforcement officers who were assigned to a specific campus. Although portions of the data collection effort have been released, at the time of this report data on the number of law enforcement officers have not been released. Given that all schools and districts were mandated to provide CRDC data, this could represent a promising avenue for estimating the number of police in schools more accurately in the future.

As noted previously, discussions regarding the roles of police, including whether they should be in schools or not, have emerged following the civil unrest and racial tensions surrounding the police killing of unarmed people of color. Particularly since the murder of George Floyd in May 2020, several school districts have opted to remove police or scale back their presence. Other districts opted to replace police with noncommissioned security officers or some other arrangement. Even before the murder of George Floyd, several organizations advocated for the removal of police from schools and reinvestment of those funds into behavioral health support for students. For example, the American Civil Liberties Union made this argument in its 2019 report *Counselors, Not Cops: How the Lack of Mental Health Staff Is Harming Students*. It is likely that school policing will continue to be reconsidered, but as of the current writing, federal funding is still available to support the implementation of law enforcement in schools, and many districts continue to use officers. A dedicated and consistent source of prevalence data regarding police in schools is critical to understanding and answering important questions about the use of police in schools.

The Importance of Understanding the History of School Policing

The history of school policing helps us put our current policy environment in context. Police did not suddenly arrive in schools during the 21st century. Instead, they have at least a half-century of history in schools. Although there may be many reasons why police have become more present in schools over time, at least one motivation is safety. High-casualty events like the Columbine massacre, regardless of how rare they are, have elevated fear and concern about the safety of students and staff and increased focus on employing armed police to deter or respond to an active shooting incident. Such events have led to increased funding to provide schools with more access to police, regardless of the presidential administration. Despite the long history of school policing, data remain elusive, even to reliably estimate how many officers are in this position in the United States.

This history is important to consider as we examine what roles officers take on and what impacts they have on students and their schools. It can also perhaps explain current elements of school policing programs and serve as a guide for how we may adjust programs in the future. For instance, later in this report we include a detailed examination of the roles, duties, and activities that officers have in the school setting. The history of school policing can explain why the triad concept of officer roles came to be. The law enforcer role originated in the 1950s; the educator role was born out of school-based, officer-led training programs; and the counselor role was born out of community-oriented policing. This is just one example in which the history of school policing can be used to better understand a specific facet of current school policing programs. Likewise, we will also examine the expansion of officer roles in recent years, as police responsibilities in schools have continued to expand.

Models of Implementation for Police in Schools

The history of school policing in the United States provides some insight as to how and why school policing programs are structured in specific ways. For instance, we can trace the school resource officer (SRO) model of school policing back to the 1960s. However, more recent ways of implementing school police (e.g., school-run departments) have expanded, according to research and those working in the field. Although school policing (like policing in general) continues to go through adaptation, issues of generalizability across the country have led researchers and practitioners to look for implementation characteristics of successful programs as opposed to specific program models.

This section of the report will highlight the most common models for implementing school policing programs, as well as the growing need to identify promising implementation characteristics that can be used across the country to support successful school policing programs. An overview of state-by-state legislation as it relates to defining what a school police officer is, as well as the certification and training requirements they must meet, can be found in Appendix C.

Common Models of Implementation for Police in Schools

As noted in the preceding section, the first model in which police were used full time in the school setting was the SRO model. SROs fall in the chain of command of the larger police department they are employed by, and not within the organizational structure of the school district. For instance, a sergeant who oversees the SRO unit may report to a captain overseeing all community policing efforts for the department. The officers assigned to the school district report to that sergeant and not to anyone associated with the school district. That sergeant may have a working relationship with a liaison from the school district, and the officer may work with the campus principal, but in terms of formal organizational structure the law enforcement agency and the school district are separate. Programs under

an SRO model tend to have officers return to the department for assignment when not under contract with the district. During long vacation periods, some departments will keep officers in this unit working with students through summer programs or other community policing activities, while other departments may return these officers back to typical patrol duties.

In SRO models, there is also usually some form of a contract between the school district and the local agency (city police, county sheriff, etc.) to provide law enforcement services beyond responding to calls for service. These are often referred to as memorandums of understanding (MOUs), interlocal agreements, or intergovernmental agreements. Rosiak (2020a) notes that often the MOU or other formal agreement is taken for granted, and perhaps not seen as a critical component to the SRO model of school policing. In Rosiak's view, however, the MOU should be used as a tool to provide more clarity about the SRO's roles and responsibilities in the school setting.

In the 2017-2018 School Survey on Crime and Safety, 64% of schools in the sample that utilized commissioned law enforcement officers at least once a week had a policy that outlined the officer's roles, 55% of schools in the sample had a written policy on how the officer should handle student discipline, and 56% of schools in the sample had a policy relating to arrests on campus (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). However, on these topics and others, principals who were surveyed were often unsure if the MOU included language on the specific issues asked about.

Further, Curran and colleagues (2020) found that even when an MOU prohibited officers from engaging in activities like discipline, and they were aware of the policy, they still described engaging in activities consistent with being involved in discipline. The researchers noted that when some officers were interviewed, they would describe the policy prohibiting discipline and then proceed to describe an action that most would consider discipline. The study concluded that many of the officers had a different interpretation of what being involved in discipline meant than what was outlined in the MOU. This is concerning, especially if those implementing the program are unaware of the contents of the agreement or do not share an understanding of what is and is not allowed under the agreement.

The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) advocates for schools to obtain MOUs for their policing programs that lay out formal guidelines for how officers will work within a school or set of schools. Although the terms of these contracts vary, they usually outline the logistics of the agreement, including the method of payment by the district to the law enforcement agency for the assigned officers, the number of officers to be provided to the school district, which campuses the officers are responsible for, the period the officers will be made available to the school district, and what roles they will fulfill. Rosiak (2020a) states that most agreements likely include the business side of the agreement, but a good agreement goes much further. Agreements should include a detailed description of the roles, training, and evaluation of the program. For example, agreements should list all the situations in which SROs can engage in disciplining students and to what degree, if at all.

A more recent model involves school districts establishing their own stand-alone police departments, independent of municipal police services. Officers working for school-based departments are typically commissioned officers, just as SROs would be, with the distinction that the officers are employed by the school district as opposed to being contracted from a

municipal agency. These departments tend to follow the same structure as traditional police departments, with the chief of police being accountable to the district's superintendent or board of trustees. Although district-run police departments are still a relatively new model of school policing, a growing number of school districts across the country are choosing to adopt their own departments.

It appears that the district-run department model of policing is used by small, rural school districts as well as large, urban districts. For instance, Maypearl Independent School District in Texas, with a county population of just over 1,000 residents, has established a district police department. This is likely the result of fewer law enforcement agencies being available in the area for the district to contract with, as well as a lack of capacity from the existing agencies to assign an officer to the district. Likewise, the Los Angeles Unified School District, a large, urban district, has (as of the writing of this report) its own district-run police department with more than 500 sworn and nonsworn personnel serving the school district.

Although SROs and district-employed officers are the two most prevalent models of implementing school policing programs, there are variations in both. For instance, many school districts use noncommissioned security officers alongside commissioned officers to support their work. In the 2019 *Indicators of School Crime and Safety* report, 71% of students ages 12-18 reported the presence of security guards or assigned police on their campus (Musu et al., 2019).

Regardless of the model being used, there are other operational decisions to be made. For example, one district may assign all or some officers to the same school each day, while another district may have its officers rotate between a set of schools. This difference, including the pros and cons of each approach, is covered by Rosiak (2020b) in his article "'Mobile' or 'Assigned'? Pros and Cons of Two Different Models of Deploying SROs." Other districts may utilize part-time, off-duty, or reserve officers to police their schools. There are likely many more operational decisions that each district and department must consider based on local and contextual factors, resulting in variations in how police can be implemented in a school setting.

A Developing Framework for School Police Implementation

Despite the two predominant models of school policing, and likely several permutations, there is a developing body of literature aimed at creating promising and best practices for implementation in general, as opposed to further elaborating on specific models. Given the vast differences between districts and police agencies across the country, it is unlikely that one model will ever work consistently for all. A congressional report published by the COPS Office stated, "It is not possible to identify a 'one-size-fits-all' series of recommendations for implementing a maximally successful SRO program" (Congressional Research Service, 2014). Researchers for some time (Atkinson, 2002; Finn et al., 2005; Kim & Geronimo, 2010; Cray & Weiler, 2011) have highlighted the importance of various structural characteristics of school policing programs that are critical to the success of these programs. Therefore, the focus has shifted to identifying implementation characteristics that might lead to more positive outcomes, as opposed to a defined model. Although many of these ideas have been mentioned in academic research, they are considered "lessons learned" based on years of experience in implementing school police programs, rather than a strong empirical base

of research findings. As noted later in this report, the concept of a defined yet flexible structure for school policing featured in almost all of the meetings that NIJ held with both researchers and experts in the field.

Leadership for Educational Equity (2017), a nonprofit leadership development organization, compiled recommendations from the American Civil Liberties Union, the COPS Office, and the National Juvenile Justice Network and outlined the following implementation characteristics that are believed to produce more positive outcomes:

■ Develop governance documents (e.g., MOU).

■ Distinguish between crime and discipline, and do not involve officers in school discipline.

■ Collect and share data related to officer duties to promote transparency and accountability.

■ Define SRO roles clearly so that all parties are aware of these roles.

■ Provide training, especially training specific to the officer's role in the school setting.

■ Promote nonpunitive approaches to student behavior (e.g., research-based practices to improve school climate).

■ Enlist and work collaboratively with partners in the community.

■ Review data on outcomes and adjust accordingly.

A similar set of characteristics was also outlined in a Regional Education Laboratory West Research Brief produced by WestEd, which specifically called for (1) the development of MOUs that govern the relationships between school districts and police agencies; (2) a careful process to select officers for work in schools; (3) significant and specialized training for officers working in schools, including training to address implicit bias and racism; (4) an emphasis on the non-law-enforcement roles of school police; (5) better integration of officers into the schools and communities they serve; and (6) the gathering of data for accountability and program improvement (Petrosino, Fronius, & Taylor, 2020).

One NIJ-funded project[7] (funded under the Comprehensive School Safety Initiative) undertook a rigorous study to determine the impact on student and school outcomes of implementing an evidence-based training framework to improve school policing programs. This specific framework was described by McKenna and Martinez-Prather (2017) in *Translational Criminology*. The characteristics of their implementation framework included:

■ Identifying a specific individual to be responsible for overseeing the policing program

■ Setting goals for the program each year

■ Training officers to support those goals

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[7]For a full description of the study, see: https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/awards/2016-ck-bx-0003.

■ Training school staff on the policing program and its purpose

■ Regularly examining data to assess progress toward goals

■ Making changes to the program as needed based on the data

The study was implemented in Texas with six different school districts and a total of 24 schools participating. Schools that already had an assigned SRO were assigned to either the treatment group (a trained team ensured all implementation characteristics were implemented and supported) or control group (in which business was conducted as usual). The study aimed to test whether the implementation characteristics would produce more positive outcomes for the school and students. As of the writing of this report, final results have not yet been reported, but the study highlights a significant change from the historical approach to implementing school policing programs.

Overall, the field has moved from attempting to define exactly what officers should be doing and how, to more flexible models. However, there is still more work to be done. For instance, noticeably absent from this discussion and from the literature relevant to school policing programs is how officers are selected for these positions. What characteristics make for a good school police officer? What processes are agencies and districts using to select officers for these positions? How are school officers assessed or evaluated differently from patrol officers, since the work is different? New officer selection is a detailed process into which police departments put enormous amounts of time. Still, it is unknown what the process for selecting school resource officers looks like. Existing implementation models should be expanded to include topics such as officer selection and other critical elements likely to impact the quality of a program. Moving forward, practitioners, researchers, and policy groups seem to agree that if police are going to be used in schools, a single model of implementation is unlikely. Instead, it is preferable to develop research-based implementation characteristics that are more likely to produce positive outcomes and reduce the chance for harm.

The Roles and Activities of Police in Schools

Perhaps one of the most studied and debated areas in school policing is the role of officers who work in schools daily. What should officers be focused on when serving a school? Who should define this role? Should there be one defined set of roles for all officers who work in schools? The questions surrounding officer roles in the school setting are complex and depend on many factors. The history of school policing can explain why officers fulfill certain roles, but more recent research has shown that these roles and the activities associated with them continue to expand. Although expanding roles may be an adaptation necessary for school policing programs to meet the needs of students, staff, and communities, role conflicts and inconsistencies can arise. Additionally, the role of officers in schools has never been under more scrutiny, as discussions are happening across the country among school districts and communities about whether police should be working in schools at all, and if so, what their role should look like. It is likely that these ongoing discussions will continue to influence the presence and roles of police in our schools moving forward.

This section of the report highlights the well-established triad concept of officer roles, the role of police generally, the expanding and conflicting nature of officer roles, and potential issues related to program outcomes that could be impacted by the roles of an officer.

The Triad Concept of Officer Roles

The triad concept is the most common way in which the duties of a school police officer have been categorized. Using this concept, officers working in schools have three main roles: law enforcer, educator, and informal counselor/mentor (Kennedy, 2001). The National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO, 2021a) identifies this triad model as the best practice in defining the main roles of school police officers.

The *law enforcer* role entails typical activities such as crime prevention, the application of appropriate law, and the apprehension of individuals who violate the law. These activities are typically achieved by officers who patrol the campus and grounds, investigate complaints from staff and students, and generally ensure the school day is uninterrupted by safety concerns (Lawrence, 2007). Not surprisingly, research on the triad concept and school officer roles in general has found that officers typically take on the role of a traditional law enforcement officer most often (Coon & Travis, 2012; McKenna, Martinez-Prather, & Bowman, 2014; Rhodes, 2017). It has been reported that more than 60% of an officer's time is dedicated to traditional law enforcement activities while working in the school (McKenna, Martinez-Prather, & Bowman, 2014).

The *educator* role, like that of a classroom teacher, involves officers teaching students (and sometimes staff) about a variety of topics related to crime, the law, and positive decision-making. For instance, Coon and Travis (2012) noted that 41.6% of officers reported teaching Drug Abuse Resistance Education, 26.6% reported teaching alcohol awareness education, and 28% reported teaching some form of crime prevention. The educator role has also expanded beyond the normal classroom setting (McKenna, Martinez-Prather, & Bowman, 2014). Officers often use interactions with students as teachable moments throughout their work in the school environment to promote safety and positive decision-making (Kennedy, 2001).

The final role in the triad concept is *informal counselor/mentor*. This role refers to officers aiding students and, at times, their families with law-related issues — typically in the form of informal guidance on behavior and discipline issues, as well as other topics that relate to crime and overall school safety. Approximately 86% of officers working in middle and high schools reported providing some form of guidance or mentoring to students and families on these types of issues (Coon & Travis, 2012; McKenna, Martinez-Prather, & Bowman, 2014).

The three major roles articulated in the triad concept can be plotted against the history of school policing presented earlier. The predominant role of law enforcer can be mapped to the original need for police in schools in the 1950s. Recall that the reason for bringing police into schools full time was a desire for officers to deter crime by developing better relationships with students. The educator role became more prominent during the 1980s, with the expansion of school-based drug prevention programs that placed officers in classrooms to teach students. Finally, during the community policing and problem-oriented policing movement of the 1980s and 1990s, officers stationed in schools began to adopt the informal counselor/mentor role as mediators and problem solvers. The triad concept may be considered a natural result of how the focuses and functions of school police officers have evolved over time. This could mean that as school policing programs continue to evolve, officer roles and duties will also continue to evolve. Changing roles may be appropriate to meet changing needs, but adaptations must be considered in terms of working with and supporting existing roles, as well as the type of training that will be required for officers to carry out these roles appropriately.

The Role of the Police Generally

To place school policing in context, we must also consider it within the larger context of police roles in the general community. From the early 1800s, police in the community have

had conflicting roles. For instance, much early police work was split between social service activities, like working in soup kitchens, and acting as a social control mechanism for the rich and powerful (Kappeler, Sluder, & Alpert, 1984). In the 1920s the police became more professionalized and began serving as objective crime fighters, a role that continued for much of the 1900s. However, there have been times throughout the 20th century when police have been used as a mechanism of social control such as they were early on. For instance, in the 1960s, law enforcement agencies in certain parts of the country were used by elected officials to maintain the social structures of racism. Birmingham (Alabama) Public Safety Commissioner Bull Connor used arrests, police dogs, and fire hoses to break up peaceful demonstrations of largely Black protesters against the city's segregation policies. This again illustrates the ongoing conflict in the United States about the nature of the role of the police.

As noted previously, the 1990s brought further adoption of community-oriented policing that focused on officers building relationships within the community to solve local problems. Although programs focusing on community-oriented policing existed prior to the 1990s (e.g., the New York City Police Department's Community Patrol Officer Program, the Newark (New Jersey) Foot Patrol Experiment), many interpreted this wider adoption in the 1990s as a large-scale national movement away from the long-standing crime fighter role back to a public servant role. The 9/11 terrorist attacks, however, pushed the focus of the police back to crime fighting, as they were expected, almost overnight, to perform activities related to counterterrorism and immigration control (Brown, 2007; Murray, 2005).

The conflicting nature of police work is highlighted in elements of Herbert Packer's (1968) crime control and due process models of policing, as well as elements of Joy Pollock's (2016) public servant role. Packer's crime control model emphasizes the crime fighter role, in which the most important function of the police is to suppress crime quickly and effectively by any means necessary. Juxtaposed to this role are elements of Packer's due process model and Pollock's public servant role, which presumes that those committing crimes are not so different from the general population, police should serve everyone (including those who are not supportive of them) with civility and legality, and police have limited ability to influence crime rates because these rates are the result of complex social forces.

A more recent illustration of the conflicting roles of police is the "warrior versus guardian" discussion. The warrior mindset outlines the expectation for officers to combat crime in the community as a primary focus. Officers are socialized through training to be suspicious of citizens, wary of danger, and ready to respond to a threat with little or no notice. The guardian approach, in contrast, places officers in service to the public good (Pollock et al., 2016; Rahr & Rice, 2015). Qualities such as communication, cooperation, and legitimacy are considered more desirable than command and control under this approach, and thus should be emphasized in the work of police.

Regardless of the time period of focus or the terminology used, what is important to note is that the two primary roles of the police — crime fighter and public servant — are at times in contradiction with one another. This conflict is sometimes exacerbated by the necessary element of discretion present in all of the decisions officers must make.

The Expanding and Conflicting Roles of School Officers

The history of school policing indicates that the roles, functions, and activities of school police officers have grown and expanded over time. It is no surprise, then, that more recent research examining the roles of school police has identified some new roles that are not captured by the long-standing triad concept (Denham et al., 2016; McKenna, Martinez-Prather, & Bowman, 2014; Rhodes, 2017). For instance, one study found that officers described serving in what they called a "surrogate parent" role that does not necessarily align with any role in the triad concept (McKenna, Martinez-Prather, & Bowman, 2014). This role involves providing emotional support and material items, such as clothing and school supplies, to students. That same study identified another role, "social worker," which encompasses actions and duties aimed at providing a higher quality of life for the student.

Rhodes (2017) similarly identified the social worker role in her work. Officers reported going to students' homes to check on them and working with other community agencies like child protective services to ensure that children were cared for in their homes. Rhodes (2017) found that more than 80% of the respondents had conducted what they identified as social work within the preceding month alone. More recently, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services has expanded the traditional triad concept to include the emergency manager role — developing and implementing comprehensive safety plans and strategies in consultation with other first responders and school administrators. Emergency management includes activities such as organizing and conducting emergency drills, conducting safety audits, and coordinating response efforts with local responders.

Officers may not be acting in just one role at a time. For example, research by McKenna, Martinez-Prather, & Bowman (2014) found that most officers reported acting in more than one role simultaneously. Officers reported that they felt as if they were asked to go from law enforcer to counselor to educator within minutes, depending on what the situation necessitated. Brown (2006) came to a similar conclusion when examining officer roles and stated that school officers likely have a multifaceted role. This further illustrates the complex nature of officer roles and activities in a school setting. Not only are roles different among campuses or districts, but they differ by situation.

Although local adaptation may be necessary in a school setting for many reasons, it can create problems if roles are not clearly defined and understood, or if officers are not trained for the various roles they may be asked to fulfill. Weiler & Cray (2011) stress the importance of understanding and defining the roles of school officers in the context of overall program success. These observations from the literature are consistent with what was discussed in the National Institute of Justice School Policing Meeting series that will be further examined later in the report. One meeting participant, for instance, noted that officer roles are "fragmented" and likely driven by local context and environment. This would explain the wide variation in roles as well as the current notion that they are expanding.

The conflict within general policing about varying and expanding roles is arguably even more pervasive in a school setting, which goes beyond the municipal officer's need to understand criminal law to include grappling with state education codes and local school district policy. For example, officers may be placed in situations that are not typical for traditional law enforcement, resulting in a law enforcement response (e.g., arrest) to an incident that could have been handled by an educational response (e.g., detention).

There are also subcultural elements that differ between law enforcement and educators. Specifically, McKenna and Pollock (2014) noted that role conflict emerges when the law enforcement subculture (crime fighter or law enforcer) conflicts with the educational and mentoring goals of a school setting.

It is possible that this conflict may be responsible for some of the inconsistent or negative outcomes that studies of school police have demonstrated (Brown, 2006; McKenna & Pollock, 2014). For instance, Martinez-Prather, McKenna, and Bowman (2016b) concluded that the role officers fulfill in a school setting likely impacts how they respond to issues of student misconduct. McKenna and White (2017) found that as an officer took on more of a law enforcer role, the use of legal means to address student misconduct increased; as an officer shifted toward a mentor role, the use of counseling and other school-based responses to student misconduct increased.

It is vital that individual officers, as well as school staff and administrators, clearly understand what roles officers should or will have in the school setting (Clark, 2011; Finn et al., 2005). Defining officers' roles in the school is particularly important in terms of how they react to violations of criminal statutes versus noncriminal, code-of-conduct violations. There should be a clearly stated policy defining if, when, and how officers should address code-of-conduct violations that do not rise to the level of a criminal offense (Clark, 2011). As noted later in the meeting recap section of this report, meeting participants stressed this point by indicating a need to better align officer selection, evaluation, job descriptions, roles, and duties with the actual work that officers perform in the school setting daily. They further discussed the need for this type of information to be widely shared with all involved in the policing program, beyond simply being included in a high-level document like a memorandum of understanding.

The fact that the roles, duties, and activities of officers may be expanding is important to the larger understanding of policing programs. It is probable that the variety of program implementations and numerous officer roles make empirical comparisons of their impact on various student outcomes challenging. Evaluation reports are often plagued by poor descriptive validity,[8] especially regarding details about the implementation and the components of the intervention. This may explain why research on school policing is described, at times, as inconclusive and weak. The programs can be vastly different, and many evaluations have compared schools with policing programs to those without, instead of considering the various structural components of specific programs. Not only is this lack of data on implementation characteristics problematic for researchers seeking to understand the effectiveness of school policing, but it also hampers attempts by practitioners and policymakers to implement sound school policing programs. It is not a simple task to glean from other programs around the country what is working, what is not, and, more importantly, why.

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[8]Descriptive validity refers to the accuracy and objectivity of the information gathered.

Training for Police in Schools

The implementation models, roles, activities, and duties of school officers are all largely dependent on the training that officers and others working within the school system receive. Researchers and practitioners alike agree that school policing is a specialized form of policing and therefore requires training specific to the work. This section of the report examines the need for training for school officers, what types of training are most appropriate, the availability of such training at the federal and state levels, and how effective training has been to date.

The Need for and Prevalence of Specialized Training for School Police

The conversation regarding school police officers' roles, and ultimately the outcomes or impacts they have, must also consider the training they receive. As in any profession, an activity or task that an employee is expected to perform should be supported by experience and professional development (i.e., training). Since school officers engage in roles different from those of typical patrol officers — roles for which nearly all of their police academy training does not prepare them — research and practice experts suggest that the success of policing in schools may be dependent upon training officers specifically for working in a school setting (Buckley, Gann, & Thurau, 2013; James & McCallion, 2013).

For nearly all officers, the first place they will receive training to support their work is a standard police academy. However, the training provided by traditional police academies does not typically include any type of specialized training in school-based law enforcement (e.g., working in schools, dealing with students) or other specialized areas of policing (Clark, 2011). Academies usually provide a basic level of training that is critical for all officers to have, followed by on-the-job training, and eventually by specialized training to support certain functions that some officers may engage in (e.g., SWAT, narcotics). Clark (2011) concluded that the training officers receive in a standard police academy is not enough

to prepare them to work in a school. In our meeting series with researchers and experts from the field, many even noted that academy training may be part of the problem for school officers, at least in some cases. They noted that the culture of most traditional police academies runs counter to the demeanor and approach to policing needed in schools.

What types of training do officers need to be successful in a school setting? Brown (2006) concluded that officers working in the school environment need training on dealing with youth, and that generally they need more specialized training in the field of education. Researchers and practitioners have identified several other training areas useful for school police, including juvenile law, alternatives to arrest, classroom teaching techniques, cultural diversity, mental health/child psychology, adolescent development, substance abuse, and counseling (Finn et al., 2005; International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2011). A more recent study by Espelage and colleagues (2020) conducted a gap analysis of officer training and developed online training to fill these gaps. Topics included trauma-informed care, social-emotional learning, restorative problem-solving, and cultural competence.

The National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) (2021b) offers an adolescent mental health training course that specializes in teaching about adolescent behavioral development, mental health treatment, and de-escalation techniques. The theory underlying the call for additional training is that giving officers the skill set and knowledge to carry out many of the roles and activities discussed previously will promote more appropriate responses to student behavior and lead to more successful outcomes for school policing. In the meeting series that we conducted, many of these same topics surfaced as recommended targets of training courses; however, several participants stressed that training must be "job-embedded," meaning it must align with what an officer is being asked to do on a daily basis.

Despite the growth of, and attention on, school policing programs during the past several decades, there continues to be a lack of available training as well as consistency in the training received (Martinez-Prather, McKenna, & Bowman, 2016a). Although the quantity and types of training offered for school police have increased in recent years, many training programs, such as those offered by NASRO, are optional rather than mandatory. However, some progress has been made in requiring training of officers to support their work in schools. For instance, all officers funded under the hiring programs of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) are required to complete specific training.

Furthermore, at least two dozen states do not have laws addressing police in schools, and even fewer states mandate any type of training (Thurau et al., 2019). Even though research and practice indicate that school policing differs from traditional policing, it will be difficult for officers to work successfully in schools and with students if they do not receive the training they need for that environment. Providing training related to work in schools will, at the very least, help to produce officers that are better equipped to handle situations that arise in a school setting.

Many participants in the meeting series noted that even with more training available now than in the past, much of it is "one-and-done" training; officers are trained once with no ongoing training requirements. The participants stressed the need for continuing education throughout the career of a school officer. They also noted the need for more co-training between educators and police for both to get the full benefit and impact of a particular training. Knowing that so much of a school police officer's work can and should

be intertwined with the work of school staff, participants offered that the program would be better if both officers and educators had similar training or attended the same training. Overall, the participants agreed that cohesive, well-rounded training for officers and school staff would result in better responses to situations on a campus, rather than each group working in isolation based on what they have been trained to do independently.

Another issue with existing training programs is the lack of evaluation of impact. Training programs should incorporate an understanding of not only the areas in which officers need training, but also the impact, if any, that existing training programs are having. Existing training programs, as well as those developed in the future, should be rooted in systematic evaluation of what officers need and include follow-up to ensure the training has had its intended outcome.

Federal and State Training Programs

There are some national training programs that have existed or still exist for school officers. Unfortunately, research on the effectiveness of such training is limited. NASRO (2021b) offers training courses for officers interested in working in a school setting and stresses the three fundamental roles of the triad concept. NASRO offers both basic and advanced school resource officer (SRO) training courses to teach officers about their law enforcement role as well as their role in the educational process. The basic course covers foundational topics such as the roles of school police, ethics, understanding populations with special needs, understanding youth, and school law. The goal of the course is to provide the introductory resources and skills necessary for an officer to be successful in the school setting. The COPS Office requires that all officers funded under any of its grant programs complete the NASRO basic course and encourages school administrators to attend with the officers. NASRO also offers an advanced course that covers topics such as leadership, threat assessment, incident command, and crime prevention. It also covers how to work closely and effectively with school administrators using problem-solving strategies, as well as understanding the root causes of crime in a school.

In addition to these main courses, NASRO offers specialized courses in youth mental health, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), and a supervisory and management course. The mental health course provides officers with resources to better understand which student behaviors might indicate mental health issues so they can use appropriate responses. The CPTED course is designed to teach situational prevention strategies that diminish criminal opportunities and therefore increase school safety. The supervisor and management courses are tailored for those who are involved in the supervision of officers, as well as those who evaluate the effectiveness of school police programs.

In addition to training that is directly specific to law enforcement working in schools, many other agencies and groups offer courses and programs in which the content, though more general, would be useful to officers working in schools. For example, additional federal training is offered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, whose Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education program is intended to increase the awareness of mental health issues among school-aged youth for individuals who often interact with students. Moreover, the training is intended to improve responsiveness to students who suffer from mental health issues and potentially connect them with appropriate resources.

Some states have also developed training programs intended to improve school-based policing. While some of these programs are provided to officers to complete at their discretion, others are required to be completed by officers before they are able to serve a school or district. To our knowledge, 24 states have now made additional training a requirement for police working in schools, and two others have legislation providing for an optional training curriculum (Thurau et al., 2019). However, some of these states have a grandfather clause that allows existing officers to be exempt from training. As mentioned previously, the empirical research on training programs is limited.

Those states that do have training programs also differ on what topics are covered (Thurau et al., 2019). For instance, only nine states have made it a requirement for officers to attend training in adolescent development, and just six require training regarding mental health. Additionally, only five states require officers to attend a trauma-informed training course, and only three states and the District of Columbia require officers to be educated in using community resources to divert children away from the criminal justice system. Again, to our knowledge, no systematic assessments of the prevalence or effectiveness of any specialized training programs have been conducted.

Nebraska, Virginia, and Texas require some of the most comprehensive training for police working in schools. Nebraska requires that SROs receive at least 40 hours of training covering a variety of topics such as student rights (including legal rights and rights to privacy), conflict de-escalation techniques, teenage brain development, adolescent behavior, trauma-informed responses, and preventing school violence (Thurau et al., 2019). In addition, officers learn about the complexity of working in schools through training on diversity, cultural awareness, and ethics. This type of required training is thought to minimize ambiguity regarding an officer's role in the school while also improving student outcomes. Nebraska's legislation on officer training also requires that parents be notified immediately after their children are involved in any activity with an officer, such as being questioned or arrested, and clearly states the situations in which parents should be notified or should be present.

Virginia has taken similar steps in establishing school police training requirements (Thurau et al., 2019). This training was developed through the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety, which was created within the state's Department of Criminal Justice Services. The training is delivered through four modules covering topics such as officer roles, the impacts that an officer can have on student disciplinary outcomes, legal issues such as students' rights to privacy, implicit bias, adolescent development, de-escalation, how to recognize signs of mental distress and trauma, and cultural awareness.

Finally, Texas requires statewide training for officers working in schools with the goal of improving student outcomes and building successful school policing programs (Thurau et al., 2019). Officers are trained in various techniques to respond to student misconduct, including mediation, restorative justice, and conflict de-escalation. The focus is on training officers in these tools so they can be used in place of more punitive responses when it is appropriate. The program also educates officers on child and adolescent development, and how the various stages of development may influence student misbehavior. The training covers information on mental health, ways to recognize students who need additional support, and how to respond to students who have faced traumatic events. Finally, the program provides training on how best to support students with special needs when working in a school setting.

What seems to be more common than traditional classroom training for officers is what has been referred to in research as informal, on-the-job training. In practice, school police receive this training in a way that resembles the more formal field training officer program that exists in municipal departments across the country. That is, school police reported learning from other, more seasoned officers who have been working in schools (Martinez-Prather, McKenna, & Bowman, 2016a). Some even admitted that trying things and making mistakes while on the job is a form of training for them. Participants in the meeting series noted that this type of training should be intentionally included in the scope of ongoing training throughout a school officer's career.

The Possible Impact of Not Training School Officers for the Job

Among researchers and practitioners, there is a general concern that if officers are not trained specifically for their work in a school setting, this lack of training can have negative impacts on the students, schools, and districts they serve (Martinez-Prather, McKenna, & Bowman, 2016a). For example, many researchers and those in the field have noted that middle and high school students are still going through brain development, and it is common for them to act out at times. However, officers who lack training in adolescent development may not fully understand teenage cognitive development and may respond in a manner that would be appropriate with adults but is inappropriate for the school setting. If provided appropriate training, officers may be more equipped to respond to students in age-appropriate ways. Additionally, school codes of conduct might vary between schools or districts, which makes it imperative that officers understand their role in the school to which they are assigned. When new officers begin working at a school or district, they should be given training about the specific setting to fully understand how they are supposed to operate in that school. The need to align training with the work that school officers are actually doing in a school setting again highlights the critical need to clearly define and communicate officer roles and duties as well as the overall goals of the school policing program.

Although many external factors are likely to shape an officer's behavior, including personal characteristics and other aspects of officer selection, appropriate training should cover the expectations for police and school administrators. Many have stressed that for an officer to be successful in any environment, but perhaps even more so in a school setting, training should match the roles and expectations that have been established, as these are likely to vary between districts or even between campuses within the same district. The history of school policing and our research on officer roles in the school setting both indicate that officers are being asked to do more now than before, but training has been lacking to adequately prepare officers for these roles. This lack of specific training can result in officers not being fully prepared, and consequently, being unable to effect positive outcomes for students, schools, and districts. Training programs in the future should empirically examine what officers truly need in terms of training and evaluate the impacts of training on officer knowledge, attitudes, and performance.

Overall, the training landscape for police in schools has improved in recent years. There are some dedicated local, state, and federal training programs, but they are still plagued by issues of scalability, a lack of evaluation, and a one-and-done mentality. These issues are particularly concerning because training is arguably the most important piece of any

school policing program. It has been heavily documented in both research and practice that school policing is significantly different from traditional policing in a community. Therefore, officers who are not trained for this specific job may revert to the police academy training they have received to prepare them for work in the community, which is not appropriate preparation for the school setting. Moving forward, we must develop not only baseline training programs that provide a basic framework for school policing, but also more advanced courses that align specifically to what an officer is being asked to do in a certain school setting. These trainings should be ongoing as officers progress through their school careers. Training cannot just be one size fits all: Districts and campuses must have the flexibility to define, within some parameters, what they need their officers to do, and training must be provided accordingly.

The Impact of School Policing Programs

In this section, we summarize the available research on the impact of school policing. After discussing the underlying theory about why such programs could work, we present findings on how school police may be perceived differently across racial and ethnic groups. We then provide a review of evidence from quasi-experimental and systematic review studies on the impacts of school policing programs on outcomes of interest.

Theory of Change: Why Should School Policing Programs Work?

A general theory of change — identifying how an intervention should work to improve outcomes (e.g., see Rogers et al., 2000) — is provided for school policing in Appendix D (Petrosino, Guckenburg, & Fronius, 2014). As shown, there are several anticipated interventions that fall under school policing, including various police patrol strategies, school resource officer (SRO) allocation, police-school liaisons, safe routes/corridor programs, and community and problem-oriented policing strategies specifically targeting schools. Although our focus here is on police officers who are assigned to schools on a regular basis, these interventions are all part of a general theory that officer presence at schools will impact safety and other outcomes. But why should school policing work?

Advocates articulate a theory of change according to which school policing is expected to increase police presence, activities, and interaction with students and staff at the schools. Police presence then serves as a deterrent to crime and misbehavior, and the greater exposure to students allows police to establish relationships with students and staff that facilitate gathering information to prevent crimes or intervening with students who may be planning a crime. In turn, this should reduce criminal behavior and noncriminal student misconduct; increase perceptions of safety by students, staff, and parents; and lead to more positive relationships between police and young persons, and between police and schools.

Ultimately, safer school conditions should promote better learning conditions, resulting in increased attendance, test scores, and grades and improved perceptions of school climate.

However, there is the possibility of unintended negative consequences. This part of the theory is at the heart of many calls to remove police from schools. The concern is that police presence in schools will increase surveillance of students, resulting in officers coming across more minor misbehavior by youth and leading to overuse of arrest for behavior normally handled informally by schools. It may also be the case that with police readily accessible on school grounds, educators may get pulled into situations that would have previously been handled informally by law enforcement. This greater scrutiny could disproportionately affect students belonging to racial and ethnic minorities and youth with disabilities. Police presence could also lead to increased fear of crime and misbehavior by sending a signal to the school community that the building is unsafe. Police presence may also signal to Black and other minority students that they are viewed as criminals or may increase perceptions of fear because of students' negative encounters with police in their communities.

Racial Differences in How School Policing Is Experienced

Scrutiny of police after the murder of George Floyd has focused on disparities in how policing is experienced by different racial and ethnic groups. Research substantiates that race influences how people experience and perceive school-based law enforcement. The studies described in this section are not impact evaluations but instead draw on data obtained from cross-sectional surveys of students in a jurisdiction. For example, a WestEd survey examined perceptions by California high school students about both municipal police in their communities and police in their schools (Nakamoto, Cerna, & Stern, 2019). Overall, compared to their white peers, students of color, especially Black students, had fewer positive perceptions of police in both instances, although this disparity was smaller in relation to students' perceptions about police in their school versus how they perceived police in their communities. In a survey of students in the Los Angeles Unified School District, "60 percent or more of Black students in the district did not believe that school police were trustworthy or cared about them, 73 percent found police overly aggressive, and 67 percent said they tended to escalate situations rather than calming them down" (Sparks, 2020). Recent data from Virginia also show a gap in perceptions of SROs between Black and white students, although this gap is smaller than in the WestEd study (Breen, 2020).

The complexity of this issue, however, is underscored by survey data from Minnesota and elsewhere. Pentek and Eisenberg's (2018) study in Minnesota indicated, as in the WestEd and Virginia studies cited above, that white and Asian students had more positive perceptions of SROs than Black, multiracial, or American Indian students. However, the odds of a Black student feeling safe were 21% higher in a school with an SRO than in a school without one. In Theriot's (2016) survey of high school students, student perceptions of school police improved with the number of interactions with an officer, regardless of race. One caveat is that the school he surveyed had only 46 African American students compared to over 500 white students.

Racial differences are not just evidenced in how students perceive officers, but also in how officers perceive the students they are policing. Fisher and his colleagues (2020) conducted a study in which they examined the perceptions held by school police. They interviewed school police from one majority-white district and one majority-Black district. They found

that officers from the majority-white district considered the most vital threat to school safety to come from intruders, and the officers from the majority-Black district considered the most vital threat to be from the students themselves.

Methodological Criteria for Safety Outcomes

It would be ideal if all studies were created equal. If every study were conducted using the same methods, measured the same outcomes, and came to the same conclusions, we would only need one study to understand the impacts of an intervention like school policing. Instead, studies vary on all sorts of dimensions, and a selective or haphazard sampling of studies could lead to erroneous or biased conclusions in assessing the evidence on school-based law enforcement. Fortunately, the research community has been developing methods for assessing literature and reducing bias when examining the evidence for an intervention.

For this review, although we did not complete a formal systematic review and meta-analysis, we did execute and document comprehensive searches of the literature to identify the evidence on school-based law enforcement (see Appendix E for a list of databases searched). To be most relevant to the current context, we looked only at studies published or made available from 2000 to 2020 and, as mentioned earlier, limited our considerations to the United States. We focused on two types of evidence considered by many researchers to be the strongest methodologically: systematic reviews and meta-analyses, and experiments and quasi-experiments (e.g., Petrosino & Boruch, 2014).

The first of these are rigorous research syntheses known as systematic reviews and meta-analyses. Research syntheses that comprehensively cover the prior research on school-based law enforcement can be valuable for determining what the evidence collectively reveals about the impact of the intervention. Syntheses in this area can vary considerably in terms of purpose, inclusion criteria, comprehensiveness, and outcomes of interest, but they share a general recognition that there is insufficient evidence for drawing a decisive conclusion about the overall effectiveness of noneducational school policing programs (Petrosino, Guckenburg, & Fronius, 2012; Gonzalez, Jetelina, & Jennings, 2016; James & McCallion, 2013; Raymond, 2010). The evidence they include on safety outcomes is not suggestive, however, of a positive impact for school-based law enforcement (Stern & Petrosino, 2018).

The second type of evidence that we considered here is quasi-experimental and experimental evaluations. Considering that police have been working with schools since the 1950s, and that this has become a more popular strategy since the 1990s, it is surprising that there are comparatively few methodologically rigorous studies available to review. Many of the completed studies are descriptive rather than evaluative and do not report on outcomes. Of the evaluations that do include outcome data, most were not conducted with research designs that are credible in establishing the impact of school-based law enforcement (Fisher & Hennessy, 2016). For example, a popular type of design is the pre-post (before and after) evaluation. Most researchers are highly skeptical of the findings from pre-post evaluations because they do not control for many factors that can confound results (e.g., Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002).

We did not locate any randomized controlled trials that were relevant to understanding the impact of police in schools. Indeed, the randomized experimental studies involving police in schools that we located for this report focused on the effects of police-taught

prevention curricula, such as Drug Abuse Resistance Education, on student outcomes such as self-reported drug use; these studies have not specifically focused on school safety as an outcome.

We also examined quasi-experiments involving a comparison group. These ranged from designs that are less controlled (i.e., nonequivalent comparison group designs) to more rigorous quasi-experimental studies that included matching to form equivalent sets of treatment and control schools.

The impact studies that we examined also did not look at more nuanced findings of how the impacts may have been moderated by other factors, such as the types of activities and roles that officers emphasized. For the most part, the studies looked at the relationship between the presence of, absence of, or increase in school-based law enforcement (or funding to support school police officers) and outcomes.

Impact of the Presence of School Police on Safety

There is no conclusive evidence that the presence of police in schools has a positive effect on students' perceptions of safety in schools. This is not to say that there are no positive findings scattered across the studies we considered, but that in their totality, these studies provide no evidence base that suggests that police presence in schools makes a difference in improving safety outcomes.

The most definitive review is being completed by Fisher and his colleagues (forthcoming) for the international Campbell Collaboration. In this review, the authors conducted a systematic and exhaustive search of literature to find studies of school policing, identifying quasi-experiments published or available through 2020 that met the criteria for focus, rigor, outcomes, use of a comparison group, types of data used, and scale of the program studied. We should note that this review was broad and considered a wide range of policing strategies used in schools, ranging from SROs to "safe route to school" interventions. The review also covered over 40 years of publications, with the first evaluation published in 1968, and included all publications that examined the theory of putting police in schools. The review suggests that school-based law enforcement has no overall effects on measures of crime or discipline in schools. In fact, the intervention of school policing was associated with slightly negative outcomes. For example, in the 28 studies that compared schools with policing to those without, the schools without policing had approximately 3% fewer crime and discipline issues than the schools with policing. In the four studies that compared individual students who were exposed to policing versus those who were not, the effect was also negative but slightly larger, with about 5.5% worse crime and discipline outcomes among students in schools without policing.

Fisher and colleagues (forthcoming) found only three studies examining school policing's impact on perceptions of safety. The difference in these perceptions between students who experienced policing and those who did not was negligible.

The lack of positive impacts for school policing reported in the Fisher and colleagues (forthcoming) review was, not surprisingly, also evident across the individual evaluations. For example, in 2004 the New York City Police Department, in partnership with the Mayor's

Office and the New York City Public Schools, initiated the Impact Schools program (Brady, Balmer, & Phenix, 2007). This was an intensive, multipronged approach to improving school safety. The program first involved analysts using data to identify the city's most dangerous schools, known as "impact schools." At impact schools, police presence was increased (doubled at minimum), and police engaged in aggressive enforcement of lower-level student crime and disorder, rigorously enforcing the New York City Public Schools' Discipline Code to correct the early conditions that were theorized as leading to school disorder. Safety intervention teams were formed to visit each school, assess safety issues, and monitor the response of principals to serious student incidents. Five "student suspension centers" were opened to deal with troubled students, and increased coordination with courts and probation officers also took place. The evaluation used a nonequivalent comparison group design, although attempts were made to find 10 comparison schools that were similar to the treatment schools in demographics and other factors.

Comparisons were also made to all nonimpact schools in the city. Outcomes included suspensions, major crimes, attendance, and police noncriminal activities. Because the emphasis of the initiative was to crack down on even minor student infractions, it may have been no surprise that noncriminal police incidents and suspensions increased at impact schools and reached substantially higher levels than those reported at comparison schools. However, no difference in major crime was indicated between impact and nonimpact schools. Despite the evaluation team's attempt to control for confounding factors, the study data indicated that compared to other New York City public schools, impact schools were more crowded and received less funding (Brady, Balmer, & Phenix, 2007).

Barnes (2008) analyzed statewide data from 1995 to 2000 to test the impact of school police in North Carolina public schools. The state's school policing program had been designed to develop a positive relationship between the police and students; the main objective was to reduce crime in and around the school. Barnes' study of the program involved an assessment of data drawn from five consecutive academic years. The evaluation utilized a nonequivalent experimental comparison group design, with data collected before and after an SRO program was implemented, to assess middle and high schools that implemented the SRO program (treatment) versus schools without the SRO program (comparisons). The number of schools implementing SROs varied each year and increased from 122 in 1995 to 176 in 2000. The results indicated that the placement of an SRO had little to no impact on the levels of crime and negative behavior in school. As a possible explanation for this outcome, the study's author suggested that if officers are often pulled out of school assignments for various tasks, they may not have an opportunity to develop bonds with students.

More mixed results are reported by Sullivan (2013) in his study of the impact of SROs in a mostly rural area of Kentucky. Like Barnes (2008), he utilized a nonequivalent comparison group design, with treatment schools having a full-time assigned SRO compared to schools without one, to examine students exposed to an SRO versus those who were not exposed. For criminal violation rates, he reports no statistically significant difference between schools with SROs versus schools without them. Conversely, Sullivan does report a positive impact for SROs on the rate of noncriminal violations of the student code, even after controlling for race/ethnicity and poverty.

Zhang's (2018) study used the School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS) to determine whether school-based situational crime prevention measures led to changes in any of seven measures of school crime. The SSOCS is administered to a nationally representative sample of over 2,500 schools and is generally completed by the principal with the help of other school staff. Zhang (2018) utilized a quasi-experimental, propensity-score weighting approach with the sample data to determine the impacts of different prevention measures on school crime. Of special interest is his analysis of schools that had security officers or police. Schools that had "security staff" (which included security or sworn police) produced an average increase of recorded incidents for three offenses (weapon possession, theft/ larceny, and drug/alcohol offenses) compared to schools that did not.

Devlin and colleagues (2018) utilized the same SSOCS data to study the impact of school police on bullying. Using three years of data, she compared 480 schools that had initiated, discontinued, or continued their use of school police from one time point to another to a control group of schools without police. She reported that there was no effect on school bullying.

Using data from the 2010 SSOCS, Swartz et al. (2015) applied propensity score matching to create a quasi-experimental design to isolate the influence of school police on school-based serious violence. She reported that schools with an officer were associated with higher rates of reported serious violence. This contrasts with a study by Jennings and his colleagues (2011), who analyzed the 2005 SSOCS data and found that the presence of an officer was associated with decreased serious violent crime. However, the use of a security officer (rather than an SRO) was associated with an increase in serious violent crime.

Zhang and Spence (2018) reported mixed findings in their study of school policing in West Virginia. They conducted an evaluation of the impact of a different type of SRO, referred to as a prevention resource officer (PRO), a sworn officer who works full-time in the school and maintains an office there. The three main components of the PRO program are prevention, mentoring, and safety. The evaluation included three years of data from 238 middle and high schools; impact was determined by examining crime and discipline outcomes using quasi-experimental techniques (including propensity score matching). Zhang and Spence (2018) reported that the presence of a PRO in any school year increased the number of reported drug crimes and out-of-school suspensions for drug crimes. When PROs were present in the school for all three years, drug crime and suspensions for drug crime remained significantly higher, but there was a decrease in violent crimes and incidents of disorder.

Sorensen and her colleagues (2020) analyzed data from North Carolina to examine the impact of implementing full-time SROs in middle schools over a four-year period (2005-2009). They reported that an SRO's arrival at a school decreased the incidence of serious violent offenses but increased a student's likelihood to receive out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, or referrals to law enforcement.

Gottfredson and her colleagues (2020) conducted a study of the impact of increasing SROs on safety, using a sample of California schools. They compared 33 public schools that enhanced SRO staffing with a matched sample of 72 schools that did not increase SRO staffing. They found that schools that increased SROs saw an increased number of

drug- and weapon-related offenses. Exclusionary disciplinary actions also increased for treatment schools relative to comparison schools. Scanlon's (2016) study, in part, examined the effect in 28 schools of reducing their SRO positions by half and compared that, using propensity score matching, to a similar set of schools that did not make that change. Her conclusion was that "limiting school police officer staff positions may have led to declines in the rates of incidents involving law enforcement and arrests, but the evidence is weak due to low statistical modeling power" (Scanlon, 2016, p. 1).

Impact of Funding School Police on Safety

Anderson (2018) used an interrupted time series design with a comparison group to evaluate the impact of a North Carolina grant program for SROs. In short, North Carolina Senate Bill 402, Section 8.36, provided selected school districts with $2 for every $1 they spent to hire or train SROs in elementary and middle schools. Using generalized difference-in-difference and negative binomial hurdle regression designs, Anderson compared disciplinary acts in 460 middle schools (some of which received the matching funds and some of which did not) over a seven-year period, before and after the policy was implemented. Anderson reported no statistical relationships between the additional dollars received for SROs and reductions in 16 disciplinary acts (including several violent crimes) that must be reported to the state. Weisburst (2019) also conducted a quasi-experimental study of the impact of funding for school police on student outcomes but focused on federal funding from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and utilized discipline records from over 2.5 million students in Texas. She reported that federal grants for police in schools increased middle school discipline rates by 6%, driven for the most part by punishments for low-level offenses or school code-of-conduct violations. This increase was most evidenced for Black students. Weisburst's (2019) analyses indicated that exposure to a three-year federal grant for school police was associated with a 2.5% decrease in high school graduation rates and a 4% decrease in college enrollment rates. Owens (2017) used the receipt of county-level Cops in Schools grants for SROs (awarded by the COPS Office) to examine the relationship between funding and school-related safety outcomes derived from SSOCS data. She reported that law enforcement agencies receiving such grants were more likely to find out about crimes at the schools and to make arrests, particularly for youth under age 15. Agencies receiving these grants were also more likely to make arrests for drug offenses in and outside of school. Owens (2017) also reported that jurisdictions receiving funds were associated with a 1.1% to 1.9% reduction in disruptive criminal incidents in school.

Arrests and Exclusionary Discipline

The potentially harmful effects of school policing, particularly for children of color, are a driving factor in revisiting this role for police. An important consideration is whether having school-based law enforcement contributes to more arrests or other formal responses to behavior by students that, without policing, would have been handled informally by the schools (e.g., by calling in parents). A report by the Justice Policy Institute (2011) argues that the presence of police on school grounds has led to increased scrutiny and increases in referrals to the justice system, especially for minor offenses like disorderly conduct.

A systematic review by Fisher and Hennessy (2016) examined studies that looked at the relationship between having an SRO and the use of exclusionary discipline (e.g., out-of-school suspension, expulsion). They reported that school-based law enforcement in the form of an SRO may be associated with higher rates of exclusionary discipline. In their review, the authors found that schools recorded 21% more incidents of exclusionary discipline after the introduction of SROs. This finding is correlational, and the authors noted that it is impossible to determine whether this difference reflects a change in student behavior or a change in the level of disciplinary or police enforcement. However, they hypothesized that schools with SROs may be applying harsher responses to student disciplinary infractions compared to schools without a police presence. Conversely, although Na and Gottfredson (2013) found that reported offenses increased in schools that added police officers, they also found that students were not more likely to receive exclusionary discipline because of an offense than were students in schools that did not add officers. There was also no evidence that police officer presence had a negative impact on minority groups or on special education populations.

An important study by Theriot (2009) examined how the presence of SROs can lead to the "criminalization of student behavior" (p. 280). In the study, Theriot analyzed arrest data from 28 schools in a large, urban, southeastern U.S. district. Thirteen schools had an SRO for at least three years, and 15 schools did not. He reported that the mean arrest rate per 100 students across the 13 treatment schools was 12; comparison schools averaged just four arrests during this period. When broken down by certain types of arrests, rates were similar for most offenses except disorderly conduct arrests: SRO schools averaged nine arrests per 100 students for disorderly conduct compared to two arrests for schools without SROs. This difference remained statistically significant even after controlling for economic disadvantage between the SRO and non-SRO schools. This research echoes a report from the Congressional Research Service, produced as a response to the December 2012 massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, that reviewed the research and found that children who attend schools that have police might be more likely to face arrest for minor offenses than children who attend schools without police (James & McCallion, 2013).

Although it is not an evaluation study, May and his colleagues (2018) contributed an important analysis to understanding police referrals of juveniles to the formal justice system. In their study, both SROs and municipal police (working outside the schools) were similar in their rate of referral of youth to the formal justice system for serious offenses and for status offenses. But for minor offenses, SROs were *less likely* to refer juveniles to the courts than their municipal police counterparts. This study adds more complexity to our understanding of whether and how police contribute to a school-to-prison pipeline.

Impact on School Shootings and Other Extreme Violence

High-casualty school shootings — such as those that occurred in Columbine, Newtown, and more recently in Parkland, Florida, and Santa Fe, Texas — bring increased attention to the role of school-based law enforcement in preventing serious acts of violence. Following the massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, the Congressional Research Service examined the literature on school-based law enforcement. Their 2013 review noted that "the body of research on the effectiveness of SROs does not address

whether their presence in schools has deterred mass shootings" (James & McCallion, 2013, p. 11). According to the report, some studies showed that schools with police on campus were more likely to have emergency plans in place and receive regular safety checks. In a study by the Violence Project researchers, their mass shooting data indicated that there were more casualties in such events when school police were present than when they were not present (Peterson, Densley, & Erickson, 2021).

There are anecdotal reports of school-based law enforcement officers involved in averting violent acts. In data being collected by the National Police Foundation on averted school violence, school police officers were involved in several cases of stopping a planned attack (Daniels, 2019). There are no data, however, that indicate whether students are more likely to share information on a possible act of violence with an officer or another adult they trust, such as a parent, counselor, or teacher. School-based law enforcement officers have also been present at some of the highest-casualty events (e.g., Parkland, Santa Fe, Columbine). The challenge with using stories or anecdotes is that there is usually one example in each category that any side in a debate can use to make their case. Active shooting incidents at schools are very rare. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has been collecting data on active shooters in the United States over the past two decades (Musu et al., 2019). The country has averaged approximately two to three active shooter incidents per year at elementary and secondary schools. These are events with potentially devastating consequences — but taken in the context of a country with over 130,000 public and private K-12 schools, this rate represents an extremely low-probability event.

Conclusion About School Policing Impacts

Although the evidence base is improving, there is still comparatively little rigorous evaluative research on the effects of police presence in schools. This is frustrating, given that school policing is an intervention that has been used for over a half-century and has consistently received widespread federal funding and policy support. However, the evidence that exists to date, in the form of research syntheses and quasi-experimental studies, does not suggest that police in schools increase safety and security. In fact, the most definitive review to date — including a forthcoming systematic review of 32 evaluations — indicates a slight negative effect on crime and discipline. In addition, some of the studies summarized here point to an increase in the use of exclusionary discipline in schools with police when compared with schools that do not have police.

Another result, albeit from correlational studies, is that school policing is experienced differently by different racial and ethnic student groups. These studies report that Black and Hispanic students have, on average, less positive perceptions of school police when compared to white students, although these differences vary across survey studies. Similarly, at least one study suggests that SROs themselves view the source of threats to school safety differently if they are assigned to a white-majority school district versus a Black-majority district.

One weakness of the existing studies is that they often focus on just the presence or absence of school-based law enforcement on campus, not on any other factors that might influence the impact of school policing (such as how officers are selected, what roles they have, the activities they undertake in the school, their training, and the support they receive from the

school and police administration). Many studies also focus on only one or a few outcomes, failing to account for the full range of outcomes that school-based law enforcement may influence (e.g., Sorensen et al., 2020).

Fortunately, to strengthen the existing evidence base, the National Institute of Justice's (NIJ) Comprehensive School Safety Initiative funded dozens of additional rigorous studies of school safety beginning in 2015. Several of these studies look specifically at the impacts of school policing. For example, as mentioned in the section on models and frameworks of implementation, WestEd is working in partnership with Texas State University and the Texas School Safety Center to complete an experimental study of the effects of a new framework for school policing on student perceptions of safety and other outcomes at 26 middle and high schools in central Texas (McKenna & Martinez-Prather, 2017). This study's use of random assignment will make it an important addition to this body of research. Ideally, future studies funded by NIJ and other agencies will continue to improve the quality of available evidence on the effectiveness of school-based law enforcement and could be valuable in informing the decisions of schools, districts, and policymakers.

What We Learned From the Subject Matter Expert Meetings

To gain more insight into the current state of school policing programs and supplement what was identified in the literature, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) planned to host a meeting that would include researchers and practitioners who are considered experts in school policing. The meeting was initially scheduled to occur in person over two days in July 2020 in Washington, D.C. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was postponed until later in 2020. As the pandemic continued, the decision was made to host the meeting virtually.

To better accommodate a virtual setting, the meeting format consisted of a series of four smaller meetings that each lasted approximately two hours over videoconference. Each of the first three meetings had a defined content area — roles, training, and outcomes — within the broader topic of school policing. Researchers and practitioners were invited to participate in a specific meeting to contribute their relevant expertise. The final meeting brought all invited participants from the first three meetings together to focus on recommendations moving forward. For a full list of the meeting participants, see Appendix A. The meeting schedule was as follows:

■ Meeting 1: October 27, 2020 — School Police Officer Roles, Responsibilities, and Activities

■ Meeting 2: October 28, 2020 — Training for School Police Officers

■ Meeting 3: October 29, 2020 — The Impact of School Police

■ Meeting 4: October 30, 2020 — The Use of School Police Moving Forward

Each of the meetings consisted of introductory remarks by NIJ leadership, a short presentation by one of the consultant authors of this report to frame the discussion for

that specific meeting, opening remarks by each invited panelist, and then an extensive focus group-type discussion with the panelists and other attendees who were invited to participate. The discussions were facilitated by the two consultants using a semi-structured set of questions designed to encourage a robust discussion among the participants. Prior to the meetings, participants were provided draft sections of this report to reference in the meeting; they were also encouraged to provide feedback and comment on the draft. Each of the meetings was recorded, and a professional note taker compiled notes to summarize the meetings for inclusion in this report.

In addition to the invited participants, NIJ staff, along with representatives from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services and the Bureau of Justice Statistics, also attended the meetings. The following sections summarize each meeting, identifying the larger thematic contributions of the participants collectively.

Meeting 1: School Police Officer Roles, Responsibilities, and Activities

The first meeting of the NIJ expert panels focused on school police officer roles, responsibilities, and activities. As noted in the section of this report on officer roles, there is a great deal of focus and attention on this area of school policing. Defining what officers should be doing, and who should be involved in making decisions about what they should be doing, is likely critical to the success of such programs. Therefore, this meeting was guided by the following discussion questions:

1. Considering both research and practice, what are the *current* roles officers in schools are engaging in?

2. Have these roles changed over time?

3. Considering both research and practice, what roles *should* officers in schools be engaging in?

4. How do the roles and duties discussed in response to each of the first two questions impact students, whether positively or negatively?

5. In an ideal world, what would an officer working in a school do to support positive outcomes for students?

6. In regard to roles, activities, and implementation of officers in schools, where do we need to go next?

From the discussion with the expert group, several thematic points were identified.

Roles are largely driven by context and environment. The participants highlighted the fact that officer roles and activities are largely driven by context and the environment. There is no set of consistent roles or actions that officers in schools subscribe to; where an officer works and what local characteristics exist drive what that officer does in the school. For instance, the group discussed how officer roles may be vastly different in an urban versus a rural context. Many participants agreed that this difference can also be intertwined with various racial and ethnic differences between urban and rural locations. The participants

agreed that in more urban environments, often with school communities composed of racial and ethnic minorities, police assume a role more focused on law enforcement. This is often characterized by patrol-related activities for identifying crime and making arrests. Environments that are more rural, however, are more likely to have officers engaging in counseling and mentor roles. This difference in roles by geography underscores the disparities in how school policing is experienced by different racial and ethnic groups that have led to concerns for districts about whether to continue their arrangements with law enforcement.

The group also discussed other contextual factors that likely contribute to the fragmented roles of officers in schools. For instance, it was noted that the roles officers engage in may change depending on which other safety programs are offered in schools. It was also noted that relationships between school staff, especially campus administrators, and officers working in the school are critical in determining what role an officer will fulfill. Collectively, the group agreed that it would be unrealistic to define a single role for all school police officers, but that some consistency would benefit the field moving forward.

There needs to be better alignment between roles and other elements of school policing. The participants discussed the need for better alignment between the selection of officers, job descriptions for these positions, the goals and expectations of all stakeholders, what officers are actually doing on a day-to-day basis, and how their job performance is evaluated. The discussion focused on the inherent link between the individuals selected for the job and their ability and willingness to meet an agreed-upon set of goals and expectations. For instance, the group highlighted that in some cases, officers might be forced into a school assignment without being fully supportive of the role they are being asked to fulfill. Further, what officers are being asked to do daily needs to align with formal job descriptions to ensure there is consistency between what is written down and what is occurring in practice. In many cases, the discussion participants noted that "great ideas" proposed and captured in formal documents like job descriptions and memorandums of understanding (MOUs) are disconnected from what is occurring in practice.

There needs to be a consistent set of expectations, but with flexibility. In terms of what adjustments might need to be made for school policing in the future, the participants identified a need for "global expectations" of what officers' roles should be, with the ability for local flexibility. Specifically, the group discussion focused on the need for specific expectations driven by policymakers at the state or federal level that also allow for local input and decisions. For example, the group mentioned that having officers handle school discipline has not been shown to be a positive strategy in any context; therefore, a recommendation could be that the officers should not engage in student discipline. However, both counseling and educating of students by officers have been shown to have more positive impact, so perhaps local school districts, along with their communities, can decide whether they want officers to teach students.

Almost every individual on the panel highlighted the need to ensure that the community — including the school district, parents, and students — is involved in identifying what an officer's roles should be. The more "global" expectations should be driven by state and federal policy leaders. In turn, a more concerted effort must be made to provide local communities that want to use police in their schools with resources on these global expectations and information on approaches to setting up their own school policing programs.

Officer roles need to be communicated and supported. Once roles and expectations are established, school districts and communities must communicate them widely and ensure they are supported. Officer roles and expectations cannot simply be recorded in an MOU or other document without further communication or discussion. The community, including parents and students, must understand the purpose of and expectations for these officers.

Teachers and staff must also understand why an officer is at school, what the officer is expected to do, and when the officer is expected to act. Additionally, campus and district administrators must support and reinforce these expectations continuously to ensure they are being carried out. Establishing roles for officers cannot simply be a top-down policy; others who will engage with the officer and the school campus must also be aware of officers' roles.

Overall, the experts in this meeting highlighted a lack of consistency in officer roles that is both problematic and expected. They highlighted a need to identify higher-level (i.e., national and state) expectations for officer roles that have flexibility to be adapted for local contexts and environments. Although it is difficult to confirm without data from the field, perhaps we are seeing such different (and even expanded) roles for school police, some of which may have positive and others negative impact, due to a lack of global standards in this area as local communities attempt to use officers to fit their needs.

Meeting 2: Training for School Police Officers

The second meeting of the NIJ expert panels focused on school police officer training. The discussion focused on the topics in which officers should be trained, and how officers should be trained. The meeting was guided by the following discussion questions:

1. In your experience, what training do officers working in schools need?

2. Currently, what training is available for officers who work in schools?

3. What states are requiring training for officers in schools, and what do these requirements entail?

4. How are states and agencies that are offering training assessing the impact of this training for officers, schools, and students?

5. What are some of the barriers to providing quality training to officers who work in schools?

6. Regarding training, where do we need to go next?

Several thematic points were identified from this meeting discussion.

"One-and-done" training cannot be the standard. The panelists agreed that the one-and-done style of training — a one-time course given to officers when they begin an assignment in schools — cannot be the standard. There must be a focus on continuing education over the course of an officer's assignment to a school. Specifically, many individuals in the meeting noted that although more training requirements are being implemented, often through state legislation, many of these are one-time training requirements. Training may be 10

hours, 20 hours, or even 40 hours, but the problem discussed by the group is that training programs need to be designed with a focus on continuing education throughout the entire career of a school officer.

Several of the participants commented that there is no other type of policing, including general patrol, that does not provide for or require continuing education. Collectively, the group outlined a hypothetical training trajectory for a school officer: initial baseline training (what all school officers need to know), a field training program with a veteran school officer, and then ongoing training throughout the officer's school-based career that covers what the officer needs to know for the specific job being done in that environment and school. The rationale for this model is that it provides an officer basic knowledge (like an academy would) that is school specific, but also allows for more advanced topics (such as implicit bias, youth mental health, and interpersonal violence) to be covered as officers grow in their positions, and as concepts and ideas change.

Officers and educators should train together. The participants focused on the need for joint/co-training between educators and police so that both groups get the full benefit and impact of a particular training. Considering that so many of an officer's duties when working in a school are interlaced with those of educators, specifically school administrators, participants offered that both officers and educators should have some similar training or attend the same training. This would not only allow for each group to complement the other's work but also familiarize each with the tools and strategies the other may use to address a particular situation. For example, a school administrator may be better equipped to know when to call for an officer's support if they have trained together, and vice versa. This model of co-training may also allow classroom educators a better look at what types of situations might require an officer to be called and how that officer will handle the specific situation.

Overall, the group agreed that a cohesive, well-rounded training program bringing together officers and school staff would result in better responses to situations, rather than each group working in isolation based on what they have been trained to do independently.

Officer training should be aligned with what they actually need. There was a great deal of discussion around how the officer training being offered might not always align with what police need or do in a school setting. One participant called for more job-embedded training that is supported by the environment in which the officer works. The participants also identified specific training topics that meet this criterion: de-escalation skills, community-based/relational policing, adolescent brain development, implicit bias, youth mental health, and interpersonal violence. During the conversation, it was also mentioned that, at times, there are good ideas for training that logically make sense, so they are implemented. However, those who identify and implement the training do not always ensure that officers have opportunities to use that training in practice. This may occur, for example, because school administrators have a different program or approach, or simply do not believe in a strategy that an officer was trained on. We need to ensure that there is better alignment between what school officers are being trained in and what is being asked of them in their actual work.

Training and officer selection are interrelated. The individuals attending this meeting identified the link between training and selection as a critical one. Even if the best training is provided to an officer, the training will not matter if the right officer is not selected for

the job. For example, if an officer is forced into the position of a school officer, they may not be receptive to learning the new methods and approaches needed to be successful in a school setting. The officer's lack of willingness to engage in the training or implement the strategies learned will result in poor outcomes, regardless of the training's quality. Therefore, this group of experts, like others, have suggested placing more focus on officer selection to ensure that quality training can have its intended impact.

There are still barriers to training. The group closed the conversation on officer training by discussing barriers to quality training for school police officers. Interestingly, the individuals in the meeting noted that the issue of officer training is much bigger than just school policing. They discussed the need to revamp existing police academies to better align with the skills and strategies officers need now — particularly, less focus on physical tactics and strategies and more on understanding the needs of those with mental health issues and other tactics to de-escalate situations. The group also noted a host of other barriers, including: (1) training that is not required to be completed is often not approved for budget and time reasons; (2) the emphasis of police training is on what is needed or required, instead of on continuing education; (3) there is limited time and money for officers to engage in training; (4) there is a general resistance in policing to change, and to participation in training that does not fit with what has always been done; and (5) metrics to measure if and what type of training is yielding positive impacts are lacking.

Overall, the group of experts on the second day stressed the importance of quality training that is continued over the course of an officer's career in school policing and mapped to what the officer is being asked to do. Officers often complete a required one-time course; some of the content may apply to what they are being asked to do locally in their work and some may not apply. Training that is ongoing, adapted to the changing dynamics of school policing, and conducted alongside the educators with whom officers will work will likely be more fruitful and produce more positive outcomes.

Meeting 3: The Impact of School Police

The third meeting of the NIJ expert panels focused on the impact of school police on various student and school outcomes. The discussion about the impact of school police covered a wide range of topics and was guided by the following questions:

1. Do you agree with the overall conclusions from the evidence about the ineffectiveness of school police?[9]

2. What data should we be collecting to assess the impact of school police?

3. What other outcomes should we be assessing?

4. What are the weaknesses of the evidence base?

5. What would be your recommendations for redesigning school police?

6. What funding is needed moving forward?

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[9]Meeting participants were provided an advanced draft copy of the recommendations section of this report and were asked for their suggestions and feedback.

Although the discussion was broad and rich, we have synthesized it into several overarching categories.

Based on the existing evidence, school policing has not shown promise. The group[10] generally agreed that the evidence as it currently stands does not support the use of school policing. Some of the panelists who reviewed the draft report expressed their view that the recommendations did not go far enough and should have concluded, based on the evidence, that "school policing should not be used." Indeed, one panelist stated, "There is an assumption in the report that school police will always exist … it seems like a forced effort to keep police in schools." Another described school policing as "an intervention in search for an outcome." Another stated that "if we were talking about the same evidence for a medication, it would be clear that it would not be in schools; evidence was well described in the report that police are not effective and may be harmful, especially for marginalized students … there is a disconnect between the evidence in the report versus the recommendations."

There was some concern that the negative impact of school policing goes beyond its effect on individual students and extends to the entire school community. Some research indicates, for example, that schools are less likely to use restorative practices when police are present, and that police reshape school climate to make it more punitive and less focused on emotional and educational supports. One panelist recommended research to understand whether an officer's perception influences school administrators, leading them to be less trusting of students, though another wondered whether a single officer could have this much impact on an entire school community.

The current evidence base may or may not be reliable. Although the group acknowledged weaknesses in the evidence base, the consensus was that the current research is conclusive, particularly when the focus is on the most rigorous studies. One panelist stated, "Yes, we can improve the research, but we should be confident in what we have found." However, another panelist expressed some reservation about making a broad conclusion from the research, citing the lack of understanding about the implementation of programs. Programs vary considerably, and even teachers and administrators working in the same school often lack understanding of officers' roles.

We need to improve data systems and the evidence. To improve the evidence, several panelists recommended that studies go beyond official school records to collect other data that would help us better understand if the behavior of students, and not just the behavior of administrators and officials, is changing. Some panelists also recommended going beyond quantitative studies to collect richer, qualitative data from officers and students. We also need more fine-grained data so we can get inside the "black box" of outcome metrics like arrest and referral. For example, referrals can result in different outcomes, and we need to understand why some referrals for a behavior result in referral to the formal justice system while others do not. Other recommendations included the need for longer-term, longitudinal data collection on school policing programs.

There was robust discussion on the variability in the implementation of school police, and participants asserted that studies need to examine these differences. There is no single

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[10]Policy and practice experts were invited to this session, but only researchers were able to attend.

school policing program, even across schools in the same jurisdiction. So many factors influence police in schools that we need to do a better job of examining these relationships. More careful measurement and description of school policing programs are needed. Another panelist recommended more research to unpack the "mechanisms" of school police programs and understand why some of them have harmful effects; those data could potentially lead to innovations and improvement.

One panelist expressed concern that although the popularity of school policing has been driven in part by concerns about school shootings, there is no easy way to obtain data for examining whether police can influence such events. As one panelist put it, "if they are there to prevent school shootings … we need data to show that they do that … we need data to study this systematically." Another concern was expressed about the national data on school police and how difficult it is to merge different databases to answer research and policy questions. One panelist recommended a national clearinghouse that would record school safety statistics.

Panelists recommended other outcome measures, such as student and teacher perspectives of police legitimacy and fairness, underlying mechanisms to explain why policing works or not, intermediate outcomes such as school climate, and social connections between students and adults. A few panelists asked whether the roles police assume in schools are disconnected from the outcomes that studies are measuring.

Given the potential harmful impacts of school policing, particularly on Black and Brown students, there was agreement that disparities need to be continuously examined. Perhaps a concerted effort to improve relationships with minority students could lead to better outcomes for school policing. Another panelist recommended that the removal of school police, which began to happen more frequently following the murder of George Floyd and subsequent protests and civil unrest, presents an opportunity for research studies to understand the impact of this decision.

We need to understand alternatives to policing. There was some discussion about alternatives to school police. For example, some jurisdictions use nonsworn security officers, but there is limited research available on the impact of security. School safety technology has also been offered as an alternative to policing, but several panelists indicated that the research does not support its use. There has been insufficient research to identify what happens when police are replaced with social workers, or when they are employed together in the school environment. Too little is known about school district police, and whether there is any impact when officers are part of a school district culture versus a municipal police department culture, as is the case with school resource officers (SROs).

There are ways to improve the school police role. To improve the school police role, several panelists offered strategies based on data, including redesigning and pilot testing innovations in the school policing model, and surveying students as to what they would like to see from their school police officers. Other panelists offered policy and practice changes, including making the SRO an attractive job with pay incentives and selecting longer-term SROs with an interview panel that includes school administrators and not just law enforcement interviewers, to determine if the officer is the right person for their students. Another panelist suggested more attention on training for police at different school levels, as there are major differences between working in an elementary, middle, or high school. One panelist questioned whether the role could be improved at all, asking, "If SROs are not

to act as law enforcement but mentors and counselors, why not just have counselors?" There was some concern expressed about whether a role in schools is the right one for police, as it is so different from their academy training.

Future funding should support rigorous evaluations. Randomized trials that examine the removal of school police, using self-report data along with official data, should be a particular focus of future funding. Other recommendations for funding include broadening studies to get teachers' views and understand how they rely on school police for classroom management. One panelist emphasized the need to understand what happens in an incident before an arrest, i.e., what builds up to it. Along with a focus on the implementation of police programs, there needs to be more attention on the expectations in a school or district about what the police are there for. One panelist articulated a desire to study different kinds of police — e.g., municipal police versus school district police versus SROs — and analyze whether there are differences in their capabilities for building trust.

Meeting 4: The Use of School Police Moving Forward

On the final day, all attendees were invited to participate in a wrap-up session. Following a summary of the previous three days of meetings, participants were invited to comment on the proposed recommendations that had been drafted for the report, including information gathered from those meetings.

What should be done about school policing. Participants wondered whether the lack of promising evidence for school policing exposes fundamental problems with the strategy that need to be addressed before tackling more specific components such as selection and training. Given the evidence to date, some participants recommended that districts consider removing police programs from their schools. However, some participants acknowledged that these programs vary considerably and that implementation characteristics have been insufficiently studied. Another strategy is to recommend that districts avoid using current school policing programs, which do not seem to be working, and instead implement and test new models that might prove to be more effective. Another participant recommended reducing the role of police in schools and having them focus exclusively on threat assessment and violence prevention.

The benefits of school policing need to be understood. There was more vigorous discussion about the positive benefits of school police and the realities that schools face. As one participant put it, "Law enforcement will be in the schools regardless for emergencies … [so] it is important to have more control over the officer that will end up serving the school … [and to] examine the models that seem to be working and implement them." Some participants shared personal stories of how a police officer made a difference in their school, emphasizing the positive, relationship-building role that an officer can play. Because of this unique role, officers must be well trained, as "there may be an incident that requires an officer to switch from a guardian to a warrior in a split second." Although arrests are used as an outcome measure in research studies, some caution was urged: "Just because the SRO makes an arrest doesn't mean it's an SRO-initiated arrest." Another participant mentioned their district's partnership with SROs, calling them "my teammates … my partners," and noted that SROs have nothing to do with suspensions, which remain the exclusive purview of the principal.

The role of police in schools is not always clear. Several panelists recommended that the report clarify objectives for SROs and school police. As one attendee noted, at least one study indicates that students who interact more with officers report that officers make them feel safer. Other research, however, indicates that the presence of an SRO may also heighten student perceptions of safety risks. Understanding the context is important. Some communities like SROs; while safety is important to these communities, the priority for the community is to have the officer in the school serve as a liaison between school and police.

Racial and ethnic disparities exist. We must recognize disparities and cannot minimize the experiences of minority communities in schools. One participant noted, however, that "there is evidence that without SROs, disparities still exist in schools." Another talked about using data to better assist minority students in their district, with SROs as part of the answer.

Future funding investments should support partnerships between researchers and practice/ policy experts. These partnerships can help to "develop research questions and next steps … toward shared goals." There seemed to be some consensus among policy and practice participants that this kind of partnership with researchers was needed. This could help ensure that research questions are relevant to the field and the results are translated in a way that policymakers and practitioners can use to make a difference.

Research also needs to unpack the specific role of SROs in school safety. Schools with SROs are also implementing other safety approaches (e.g., metal detectors, cameras, access cards). As one participant put it, "We keep piling on safety — and it is difficult to know what SROs are doing in isolation." Negative perceptions by students could also arise from the multiple ways they are under surveillance or perceived as threats, and not just due to the presence of school police. Other advice relevant to funding for research includes getting the community engaged with studies and focusing intensively on equity issues. There needs to be sustained funding for collection of and access to data, and a central repository that indicates the type of research that has been conducted. Data need to be available in real time to identify if harm is being done, data should be collected with fidelity, and, when possible, data should be collected in comparable ways across programs.

Our research needs to move beyond police presence or absence in the school to understanding the underlying mechanisms of what officers do that can change outcomes. We also need to identify and implement performance measures for process and impact to better understand variations in implementation and effectiveness across different contexts. One panelist mentioned that research on teachers and principals is stronger, as there is regular data collection on them. "We learned a lot about what makes a good teacher … the gap is that we don't have granular data on SROs that help us understand the differences between study findings and personal experiences." Better data are needed to understand what officers really do. We also need to use referral data to tease out who is referring and where a student is being referred to, as these are untapped data.

One panelist recommended that NIJ work with state school safety centers to conduct a randomized trial to better understand school police impacts. Our recommendation, according to a participant, should emphasize funding to support the development, implementation, and evaluation of school policing focused on both short- and long-term outcomes. There should also be funding to support replication or adaptation of promising

and effective programs. This research plan should include collecting data — qualitative as well as quantitative — from all stakeholders and measuring a broader set of outcomes longitudinally over time.

Other suggestions focused on implementation rather than research, including the need to support officer training so that it is available for free or at reduced costs. For example, it was mentioned that the National Association of School Resource Officers will be making more training available online and reducing its training costs. Training also needs to be standardized, as there are several providers and not all training is useful or effective.

Funding could be used to support "train the trainer" programs to increase the fidelity of these trainings, and to ensure trainings relate to the actual practice of being a school officer.

A comprehensive approach to school safety is needed. There were suggestions to better highlight the officer's role in a comprehensive school safety plan, the development of which everyone — parents, teachers, students, administrators, and police — needs to be involved in. This was stressed several times in the meeting. Specifically, there is often not a clear picture of what is going on in the schools and what the officer is doing to promote safety and well-being. For example, the officer may be doing things that impact violence outside school grounds, which does not show up in studies of school policing or safety. Or the officer may be rendering services to students, especially student victims and other vulnerable groups, whose needs may otherwise go unmet without a school officer. Emphasizing a comprehensive view was also discussed in the context of "co-producing school safety," stressing the roles of officers and others as part of a school safety plan designed to produce a positive school safety climate. "All partners including the officers need to get kids the supports they need to stay in school and divert them from justice involvement and do no harm in the process."

Recommendations and Next Steps

So far in this report, we have provided a comprehensive review of the history of school policing in the United States, common models of implementation, roles and activities associated with school policing programs, the state of training for officers working in schools, and the current knowledge base on the impact school policing programs are having on schools and students. We have also provided an overview of the meeting series that gave context to our literature review and has been invaluable in shaping the recommendations that follow in this section of the report. Before diving into our recommendations, we highlight a few points from the previous sections of the report that we feel serve as a foundation for these recommendations.

First, we must acknowledge that the history of school policing in this country has undoubtedly shaped where we are today, including the predominant roles and activities these officers engage in daily. As we refine the implementation of these programs in the future and assess the impact of police in schools, we must always consider the history of school policing to better understand the "how" and "why" behind what we are seeing today. This includes the ongoing discussions currently taking place in communities across the country regarding the appropriate roles for police, their need to be in schools, and how policing can be re-imagined to better serve all communities.

Second, although much attention has been given to the mechanics and implementation aspects of school policing programs, there is still a lack of consistency — and to some degree, disagreement — regarding how these programs should be set up and operated. This includes how officers should be selected, what they should do while working in a school, and how these programs should be assessed and measured. Also, the roles of officers appear to be expanding. Although this expansion may be a necessary response to school or community needs, it has raised questions about whether police are appropriately trained for their expanding roles. This variability also presents challenges when comparing different programs, unless careful assessment has accounted for the different roles that officers are playing in the school.

Third, the field of school policing suffers from a lack of consistent, defined, and specialized training that supports the work of these officers. Although some states and federal agencies have made such training available, much of it is not designed for the long-term sustainability and growth of officers' careers and skill sets in a school setting.

Finally, although the current knowledge base examining the impact of school policing on schools and students does not indicate promising effects, there are some research gaps that need to be addressed. These gaps highlight the disconnect that exists between research and practice. Specifically, many of the implementation characteristics that practitioners say are critical to successful programs are not being considered or measured in research studies. This has likely contributed to a situation in which most practitioners are in favor of school policing programs, while researchers, relying on empirical evidence, caution against their use.

With these four points in mind, the most important thing we can do is offer recommendations on how school policing programs across the country should move forward. Although we cannot predict the future, especially amid increased public scrutiny of police and their roles, the past tells us that school policing will likely continue to exist in some form in school districts across the country, as it has now for decades. Therefore, rather than debate at this time whether police should or should not be in schools, for those school systems and communities that choose to adopt a school policing program now or in the future, this section of the report will focus its recommendations in two broad areas:

■   Identifying specific research areas to be addressed in future studies, designing these studies with appropriate rigor and focus, and funding them appropriately so that they can inform decisions regarding the use of police.

■   Providing practical considerations for ensuring that the best possible program is put in place based on what we currently know, including officer selection, initial and ongoing training, and the use of specific implementation characteristics.

Recommendation 1: Dedicate and sustain funding for the study of school policing programs that supports targeted research to improve the existing knowledge base

The existing body of evidence regarding the impact of school policing programs on school and student outcomes is bleak. However, there are critical gaps that have been identified in this literature, as well as in the meeting series among researchers and those in the field, which must be addressed to better inform decisions about school policing programs. To do this, sustained funding will be needed from various federal agencies that fund *targeted* research in the areas outlined below. Additionally, there is also a lack of reliable and consistent data on the mere presence of officers in school, which is critical in conducting the research needed to begin to address these gaps. Therefore, there needs to be an established data source for regular survey and/or administrative data that can be accessed by researchers to conduct meaningful research and evaluation work. Some promising sources might be the U.S. Department of Education's Civil Rights Data Collection and/or the Survey of Law Enforcement Personnel in Schools funded by the National Institute of Justice's (NIJ) Comprehensive School Safety Initiative (CSSI).

NIJ received congressional appropriations to fund CSSI from 2014 to 2017. During its four years of funding, CSSI supported scores of studies relevant to school safety, including school policing. Many of these were rigorous tests in the field of specific interventions. The level of funding allocated to CSSI was exceptional and unprecedented. However, there is still a need for dedicated funding from NIJ and other federal agencies, such as the National Science Foundation's Law and Science Program and the U.S. Department of Education's Institute for Education Sciences, to fund additional studies targeted to specific areas of school policing. If the U.S. Department of Justice continues to fund school policing programs, an allocation of that funding could be provided to NIJ to ensure that specific studies in school policing are also funded. Moving forward, funded studies should address at least one of the following areas related to school policing:

- The impact of implementation characteristics on outcomes

- The alignment of outcome measures with program activities

- The identification and evaluation of local innovations in school policing models

- The impact of the removal of police from schools

First, research should examine how various program implementation characteristics impact conclusions about student and school outcomes. Much of the research literature focused on examining the impact of school policing programs simply compares the effect of the presence of school police officers on outcomes of interest (e.g., exclusionary discipline, perceptions of safety, crime/violence prevalence). These studies often account for school-level factors such as the size of the student body, urban versus suburban setting, measures of socioeconomic status, and other school variables likely to impact the outcomes being studied. In addition, details of how the police program is implemented are crucial to this conversation and can produce more fruitful recommendations for those working in the field or considering implementation or adaptation of a school policing program. Details on implementation characteristics have thus far remained elusive, however, at least according to our review of impact studies.

Many of the implementation characteristics noted earlier in the report are theorized to influence school policing outcomes. For instance, if officers who do not possess the right demeanor or personal characteristics are consistently selected, or perhaps even assigned, to the position of working in a school, that alone may impact important student and school outcomes. An officer who is forced into a school position will likely not act the same way as an officer who applied and was selected for the position. This, in turn, can impact student perceptions of safety based on the actions of the officer. Many of the participants in our meeting series noted this concern. The lack of true selection criteria and processes for selecting officers into school policing programs can hinder outcome and impact studies, because who is doing the job may influence those outcomes of interest.

Likewise, if no clear goals or roles are established for the assigned officers, one may find no impact or even negative impacts on a variety of outcomes of interest. Officers who do not understand what is expected of them and which activities they should be engaging in will likely not produce the positive outcomes expected. Factors such as officer selection and recruitment, clearly defined roles and goals, and training must all be considered when examining the impact of school policing programs.

Simply comparing schools that utilize officers versus those that do not on outcomes such as exclusionary discipline, perceptions of safety, and crime/violence prevalence is beneficial, but it would be even more fruitful to examine how implementation characteristics impact these same outcomes. Further, although our review of impact studies (including a forthcoming review of 32 evaluations) identified a negative overall effect associated with school policing, it is also fair to state that the knowledge base contains inconsistent findings and conclusions related to the impact and effectiveness of school policing programs. Considering implementation characteristics would result in more practical conclusions and solutions for those working in the field and a deeper understanding of why some programs are effective and others are not.

Likewise, the impacts of school police are also likely driven by environmental factors, including other actors in the school system (e.g., administrators, teachers). The different effects produced by these factors must be accounted for when examining the impact of school policing programs. Therefore, when looking at the impacts of school policing programs, the entire school safety approach of a campus must be considered. For instance, what other strategies and programs is the school using? Researchers cannot examine policing in isolation and then make the conclusion that this one strategy alone is impacting specific outcomes. Overall, school policing programs deserve a much more complex look that accounts for the many factors that might influence the outcomes associated with them.

Second, future studies need to align outcome measures more carefully to what officers really do and the outcomes they are likely to impact, which was a theme that emerged throughout our meeting series. For example, we often use disciplinary rates (e.g., suspension, expulsion) as an outcome measure to compare schools with police to those without. Often, the finding has been that schools with police have higher disciplinary rates. However, it is worth asking why disciplinary rates are increasing if many schools and officers agree that police should not be involved in the discipline process. Could schools be doing something to drive these discipline rates up, regardless of the presence of school police?

Logic models illustrating this alignment should be considered and applied in future research so that it is clear how practice is being interpreted in the research study. In some cases, this may mean moving beyond official data types and quantitative studies. As noted later in our second recommendation, there needs to be an appropriate place for descriptive and qualitative studies to inform more rigorous evaluative studies. These types of research might lead to more appropriate outcome measures of study that better align with the impacts expected from school policing programs.

Third, special consideration for funding should be given to the identification of innovation by districts and jurisdictions that have modified their school policing programs to better serve their communities, and to the evaluation of the impact such innovative models have. This area of research is particularly important given the current negative perceptions of police generally, as well as the calls for "defunding," "decentering," or "re-imagining" the role of the police in communities. For example, what innovative school policing programs and approaches are being implemented in districts serving large numbers of minority students? What are the early returns of such models based on student and staff perceptions, parent satisfaction, and safety and discipline outcomes? Conversely, are there districts

serving large percentages of minority students that have positive outcomes in terms of how students, parents, and the community perceive the school officers? What are the key ingredients of such programs? These are only a few of the important questions that need to be answered. And although racial differences and disparities are just one outcome that can be looked at in terms of innovative school policing programs, racial equity is an area that needs much more focus and attention.

How To Develop and Evaluate a Potential Model: Learning From the Example of D.A.R.E.

A compelling example from 20 years ago exists to show how a new model of school-based law enforcement can be developed and rigorously tested. By the mid-1990s, the school-based drug prevention program Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) had become widely popular in the United States, with an estimated 80% of elementary schools implementing the program by the mid-1990s (Petrosino, 2005). However, a series of rigorous studies questioned the impact of D.A.R.E. on self-reported outcomes of substance use (Petrosino et al., 2006). The field faced a dilemma about what to do with a popular program that was not currently showing success in experimental outcome studies.

In the early 2000s, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) decided to act. The foundation began to search for a way to take advantage of the "program delivery system" in which police were being trained to deliver D.A.R.E. to elementary school classrooms. RWJF invested $14 million to redesign D.A.R.E. To do this, they brought together two panels of experts. The first was a panel of prevention experts tasked with redesigning D.A.R.E. The second was a panel of evaluation experts who created a rigorous study to test the redesigned program. Both goals were accomplished: D.A.R.E. was revised according to the latest (at that time) prevention science, and the evaluation team was able to implement a randomized field trial involving 80 school districts so that all feeder schools would be included in either treatment or control conditions (Petrosino, 2005).

The randomized trial indicated that this effort to improve D.A.R.E. did not work (Sloboda et al., 2009). The new program had negative impacts on substance use and abuse outcomes. Nonetheless, the model employed by RWJF to bring together the best of prevention and evaluation science, innovate, and then rigorously test is an example that school policing researchers and practitioners should follow today.

Finally — and certainly now that some districts are opting to remove or reduce police presence — funded research should focus on better understanding what impacts the removal of police from schools might have on students, schools, and communities at large. While some school districts and police agencies are disbanding their school policing programs amid the current civil unrest, it remains to be seen what impacts this might have on students and schools. For instance, if we do not have police in schools and an emergency occurs or a crime is committed, a patrol officer will likely still arrive when called. Would the outcome be different? Would it be better? Would it be worse? Given the timely nature of this report, and what is occurring naturally in society in response to the ongoing civil unrest, we would be remiss if we did not mention the idea of empirically studying the impacts of such decisions. This type of research would give NIJ, and the larger body of researchers working on school policing, a completely different view on this issue that to our knowledge has not yet been considered in research.

Overall, this recommendation calls for sustained funding to look at specific issues related to school policing that are needed to advance that knowledge base. We recommend that the inherent complexity in school policing must be considered regarding the many factors and variables that could be involved and intertwined in a school policing program and the associated outcomes of interest. A funded focus in these areas will allow us to advance research in school policing, while also continuing to directly inform the needs of the field.

Recommendation 2: Ensure that the most rigorous and appropriate research designs are being used in the study of school policing

Our next recommendation builds on the need for sustained funding for research in specific targeted areas of school policing by recommending that the most appropriate and rigorous research methods be used moving forward. It is critical that any research funded on school policing programs, especially research related to assessing the impact of these programs, be conducted with the highest rigor and focus. That is, research should aim to use the most rigorous and appropriate research designs when filling the critical gaps in our knowledge base that were detailed above. This will ensure that we make strong and empirically sound conclusions about what works and what does not work when using policing in schools. It is unfortunate that in our search for impact studies to summarize for this report, we located only 32 eligible evaluations and passed over hundreds due to methodological design issues (e.g., did not include a comparison group, did not include outcomes of interest). The following methodological and design elements should be considered in future research:

■ Randomized controlled trials, when possible, or other rigorous designs

■ Descriptive validity

■ Partnerships between researchers and practitioners

■ Centralized data that include information on school policing

First, as outlined in earlier publications (e.g., Petrosino, Guckenburg, & Fronius, 2012), we continue to recommend that randomized field trials be implemented, when possible, to study the impact of school policing programs. Given that such programs target the whole school, the random assignment of treatment schools that receive the intervention and control schools that do not is optimal. When such randomized field trials cannot be implemented, we recommend other quasi-experimental designs to increase confidence that the observed results are due to the intervention being implemented. These would include approaches that use regression-discontinuity design, propensity score matching, and interrupted time series. Shadish, Cook, & Campbell (2002) provide excellent primers of these and other possible quasi-experimental approaches.

Quasi-experiments are an especially useful approach for reducing methodological skepticism in instances in which only one jurisdiction is implementing a school-based law enforcement strategy. Bloom (2003) has shown how even annually collected data can be used in a short-interrupted time series design to assess the introduction of an intervention in even one treatment school. Such a study could be further strengthened with the

introduction of a comparison school. Although the short-interrupted time series design is not ideal, it is a much stronger design than the simple before and after (pre-post design) studies that dominate the literature on school-based law enforcement programs.

We recognize the challenges that evaluators face in the field (e.g., insufficient funding, evaluating a program after the fact), but far too many impact studies are quasi-experiments with nonequivalent comparison groups. Without evidence that the comparison groups were equivalent at the start of the intervention, it is not possible to determine with confidence whether the school policing program is responsible for observed changes in the outcome metrics, or whether some other confounding factor, such as an overall change in school policy, is responsible.

Studies that do not meet our criteria for inclusion into a review of impact still have potential value, despite their methodological shortcomings. Mining the data from pre-post analyses is a possibility, as well as examining correlations between selected aspects of school safety (including police presence) and increases or decreases in school crime. There are also some qualitative studies that have investigated the role of police in schools; these can add to our knowledge. Although the internal validity issues in pre-post and correlation studies are concerning, these studies can still be mined for important insights into police interventions in schools. Such a review could proceed in narrative rather than quantitative fashion, with the focus not on "what works" but on "lessons learned." Do they suggest innovative strategies, for example, that should be tested in more rigorous designs?

Second, another improvement for research on school policing is directly related to what Losel and Koferl (1989) call "descriptive validity." In short, reports of the studies of school-based law enforcement programs are often lacking in the detail necessary to carefully assess the intervention involved. This is particularly true with respect to details of the program's implementation and the roles and functions of the officers; it is only through careful description of the intervention that we can understand exactly what was implemented and how faithful the implementation was to the original plan. At a minimum, there needs to be a checklist of information that all evaluations should provide so that they can fully contribute to the evidence base.

Third, funded studies should aim to prioritize partnerships between researchers and practitioners. Greater attention should be given to studies that involve researchers working with those in the field. This concept was brought up in our meeting series, and nearly every participant agreed. It is not a new concept; an early CSSI solicitation (in 2014) required such partnerships, often with departments and agencies taking the lead on these projects. It may not be practical for local agencies, departments, and school districts to lead such complex and rigorous research studies, but they can be valuable as partners in shaping the precise research questions and data collection measures.

Further, there is a divide between the empirical literature that researchers consider when making conclusions about school policing programs and the experiences of practitioners working in the field of school policing. Specifically, the existing empirical literature does not support positive impacts for school policing programs; however, those in the field have countless anecdotal accounts of positive impacts these programs have had on schools and students. Partnerships between researchers and those in the field can help bridge these starkly different perspectives. For example, as noted in recommendation 1, there are many

implementation elements to which practitioners attribute program quality, yet which are often absent from empirical evaluations of the impact of school policing. A partnership may not only help identify and study these implementation elements, but perhaps even further develop and replicate them beyond a single district or area. We believe that partnerships will assist in developing a more complete and translational approach to research that will improve not only programs but also our empirical knowledge base.

Finally, government can do more to facilitate studies in addition to funding them. Many states have large repositories of school-level data from surveys, test scores, and administrative collections. However, states often do not have a centralized repository for data that indicate the types of policing programs schools have. A simple list of program types would facilitate analyses examining the relationship of different types of school policing programs with school-level outcomes. Availability of these data could facilitate a wave of quantitative and quasi-experimental analyses that could increase the yield of studies and knowledge on this intervention.

This recommendation builds on the first one by highlighting the need to not only fund research in targeted areas of school policing, but also to ensure that the highest quality research designs and elements are proposed. This will allow for empirically sound conclusions that account for both quality research practices as well as vital input from those in the field.

Recommendation 3: Focus more, in both practice and research, on the selection of officers for school positions

Officer selection is an area of school policing that was noticeably absent from the articles and studies reviewed for this report, yet participants in the meeting series noted it as a critical component of programs that needs more attention. Therefore, we are recommending that the selection of school officers, as well as how they are evaluated in terms of job performance in a school position, be given more attention and focus — in both research and practice — to better understand how selection may impact other areas of interest. In much of the literature on school policing programs, selection is mentioned as a side note but hardly stressed as an area of focus or consideration. However, when discussing this area with both researchers and practitioners in our meeting series, a comment was made in almost every discussion that all other aspects of school policing's success are predicated on having the right individual for the job. Putting more focus on, and gaining a better understanding of, officer selection for school policing programs has implications for both research and practice.

First, in terms of practice, being a school officer is not the same as being a patrol officer in the local community. It is highly possible that even the best patrol officer is not the ideal candidate for a school assignment. The nature and type of work can be vastly different in many respects. Therefore, depending on the goals of the school policing program, and what duties and roles the officer will fulfill for the school, it is critical that the person selected for the position is in alignment with those goals and duties. The program can have the best intentions established through goal-setting by the implementation team, but if the person selected does not align with those goals or have the skills and abilities to carry out the

roles and duties, the program will likely not be successful. There should also be alignment between the goals of the program, the roles and duties of the officer, and the criteria used to assess and evaluate their job performance.

The same can be said for training: A school district or police agency can lay out the most comprehensive and robust training program for their school officers, yet if the officer selected for the job does not commit to learning the skills being taught, then the quality of the training will not matter. As one participant in the meeting series put it, "The training will only be as good as the officer selected for the position." One panelist, in several of the meetings, concluded that better alignment is needed across officer selection, job descriptions, the goals of the policing program, training, what officers are actually doing day to day, and how they are formally evaluated in terms of their job performance. This alignment, beginning with the selection of a school officer, will result in a policing program that is better able to produce positive outcomes for the school and community.

Despite a consensus that more focus should be given to officer selection, many of the meeting attendees discussed barriers to selection. For instance, many noted that there is a lack of criteria that identify an individual as a good candidate for school policing. Many noted that they had used their professional judgment in this area, but they still expressed a desire for more formal selection criteria and processes to assist schools and departments. Others noted that even with defined criteria, resources (mainly individuals) are scarce in many departments, making it difficult to find the best officer for the job. A contracting police agency may have to balance the need for good officers to work patrol in the community and good officers to work in the schools. Many departments are understaffed and have trouble filling school assignments. This may result in officers being forced into school positions, or those who want to be in school positions being reassigned elsewhere. A school position can be viewed as a negative assignment in some departments. Some meeting participants noted that school assignments have been seen as the equivalent of "desk duty" or being "retired while on the job." Even for school-based departments, getting enough qualified applicants was noted as a challenge. Regardless, more focus and attention should be paid to establishing criteria for school officer selection and developing ways in which these positions can be filled with the best candidates.

In terms of research, better understanding of and accounting for officer selection will likely help explain various outcomes of interest. It was suggested in our meeting series that selection is one area that could serve as a mediating variable in some cases. For instance, the officer selected for the job could impact various outcomes being considered in a study, such as arrests. If the officer selected does not adapt to the school setting, they may respond to school situations just as they would on the street and arrest students and staff for offenses in all cases in which it is legal for them to do so. Another officer selected for the job may embrace the educational environment and choose to respond in ways that educate students on their mistakes without officially arresting them for their behavior. Therefore, the lack of an officer selection process, or consideration of a process, could be contributing to an implementation problem that influences research results and our subsequent interpretation of outcome studies. Research moving forward should not only attempt to consider the impact of officer selection in outcome studies, but also assist with the development of an evidence-based selection process for school policing programs that yields officers who are best fit to serve in a school position.

Recommendation 4: Provide officers with training specific to working in schools, and to the duties and activities expected of that officer in that school

Practitioners and researchers alike agree that school policing requires a different skill set than the traditional policing an officer might engage in while patrolling in a community. Although school policing is still considered policing, the dynamics of a school, and the roles and activities officers might be asked to engage in there, are different than what a patrol officer might do each day.

To be successful, school police need specialized training with a focus on the dynamics of the school environment and the roles they will engage in. A clear articulation of specific roles for officers in the school environment must be aligned with the training required for school policing. School policing programs should also consider the need for specialized training that accounts for the changing and expanding roles of officers in a school setting. For instance, as officers take on the role of a social worker in the school setting, we cannot expect them to succeed unless the appropriate training has been provided. This again highlights the importance of clearly defining roles, not only for the sake of ensuring appropriate duties and interactions, but also so the officer can be specifically trained for what is expected in that environment.

However, despite the growth of and attention on school policing programs during the past several decades, there continues to be a lack of available training as well as inconsistency in the training received. Many states have tried to address this gap in training by passing laws requiring that officers who work in schools participate in some form of mandatory training program prior to being assigned to a school. Although well-intended, blanket statewide training requirements leave some gaps for officers assigned to a school setting.

First, we must clearly understand what officers working in schools need in terms of training. There is likely some basic training beyond a traditional police academy that all officers working in schools need; some states have implemented this kind of training, but to our knowledge no real work has gone into identifying what topics should be covered. Do officers really need to understand adolescent development? Have all educators been taught this in their college preparation programs as well? It is likely that both groups need some understanding on this topic, but there are no available studies that have systematically examined what broad, high-level skills and understanding all officers need to be successful in a school setting. Such studies could be very helpful to individual states and even the federal government, providing them a basis to widely offer a research-based set of trainings that equip officers with what they need to be successful in a school setting.

In our meeting series, both researchers and those working in the field mentioned how critical it is that training for officers be "job-embedded." This means that the training topic must be something that officers need and will use in their work. Another meeting participant noted that we have a lot of "good ideas" for training topics, but many of these topics are rarely used or implemented by officers in practice. Therefore, we must be careful to identify training content that will be useful to officers working in schools. For instance, one officer mentioned that they had received training on a specific program, but when they returned to campus, school administrators were not interested in such a program. This again highlights the need to carefully articulate an officer's role so that training can be aligned to that role.

Meeting participants also recommended conducting co-training with officers and school staff, including administrators (Martinez-Prather, McKenna, & Bowman, 2016a). School staff should be educated on the purpose of the policing program and informed of what officers will and will not do during their work on campus. Additionally, co-training officers and school staff on various programs and strategies for student safety is necessary, as neither group typically works on its own, nor should they. Common understanding and coordination are vital to the successful implementation of a school policing program.

Second, a basic set of school policing skills should not be all an officer receives to support their work in schools. Each policing program should have specific and defined goals that are mapped to the needs of the campus, school system, and community. These goals will result in a customization of the roles and activities that officers engage in. Therefore, a second layer of training should be mapped to the work that each specific officer will be doing to support the local goals for the policing program. This type of training cannot be delivered en masse by state or national training programs, but rather must be developed locally so that as goals and aims change over time, officer training can be modified to follow suit.

As a central point of discussion in the meeting series, several participants noted that we must move away from a "one-and-done" mentality when it comes to school officer training. One-time, mandated courses required by states, or some other authority, may provide a good base level, but ongoing, job-specific training must also occur. For instance, the training progression could be as follows: (1) initial base-level school officer training (e.g., to fulfill state requirements), (2) a field training program at the department level that is specific to working in a school, and (3) ongoing training based on what officers need for their specific job environment. A model like this is how police training typically progresses in other units of law enforcement (e.g., SWAT, narcotics, detective).

It is critical that the ongoing, job-specific training be mapped to what the particular officer needs. For example, not all school districts or campuses will want their officers teaching classes to students. Those that do can ensure the officers learn classroom management practices and lesson development to make certain they have been trained to carry out that role successfully. In this example, the officer may not need content-specific training because they may already be an expert in the content area (e.g., drug prevention), but they may still need the skills to fill the role of an educator. This skill set may be rudimentarily covered in a broad, statewide training program, but likely not in any detail, because it is not a task common to all officers.

We know from prior research and practitioner experience that most officers going into school policing have experience and academy training related to the work of a law enforcement officer. However, we also know that the type of skills needed and the work being done in schools differ from what an officer does in the community. Schools and police agencies, working with specific state and federal agencies as well as various training providers, should develop and implement a research-based training approach that consists of two tiers. The first tier should focus on the broad, high-level skills and knowledge any officer will need to be successful in a school setting. For example, topics such as juvenile law, alternatives to arrest, and cultural diversity are applicable to all school officers. A second tier of training should be aligned to the identified skills and knowledge officers need to be successful in carrying out the specific goals and focus of each individual policing program.

Recommendation 5: Implement and test a consistent set of implementation characteristics for setting up and operating school policing programs

In our final recommendation, we propose implementing and testing a set of implementation characteristics for school policing programs that has been developed by synthesizing existing literature and discussions with experts in the field. This recommendation could be viewed as the culmination of our first four recommendations in that it ties together key implementation elements, such as selection and training, and can also provide a framework for future research that addresses many of the targeted areas that we mentioned in our first recommendation.

School policing programs have predominantly focused on two models of implementation: the school resource officer (SRO) model and the school-based law enforcement model. Additionally, much of the literature and many practitioners have focused granularly on what roles and activities officers participate in while working in a school setting. Although these are important considerations, a school policing program should move past simply identifying how police officers will be assigned organizationally (which is often based partially on financial considerations) and what they should be doing, to a more substantive process that further defines how school policing programs are set up structurally.

This need was brought to light during the meeting series held in conjunction with this report. Overwhelmingly, the researchers and practitioners who participated discussed a fragmented set of officer roles and expectations that often differ by local context and environment. Considering this, the meeting participants discussed the need to align the selection of officers, job descriptions for these positions, the goals and expectations from all stakeholders, and what officers do on a day-to-day basis by establishing global expectations for school policing programs that still allow for local flexibility.

One participant noted that perhaps we are in the early stages of true program development, a process that can take years to specifically determine how policing programs should operate to be successful. Another noted that school policing as a field is currently in a position akin to where mental health programming was in the 1970s and 1980s — we are implementing programs but do not fully understand if they work, how they work, and what needs to be done differently. The group collectively laid out three stages: (1) information gathering on what officers are doing and what impact they are having; (2) program development, implementation, and evaluation; and (3) program replication and adaptation. Taking this approach, researchers and practitioners collectively have identified promising practices that could serve as a framework for school policing programs (i.e., at stages 1 and 2), while still leaving flexibility for local agencies and school districts.

There are vast differences between the districts and agencies across the country that may choose to use a school policing program; therefore, it is unlikely that one rigidly defined model will work for all. However, there are structural practices and elements that can be replicated to produce more successful programs. Earlier, we noted the Leadership for Educational Equity (2017) report that compiled recommendations from the American Civil Liberties Union, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, and National Juvenile Justice Network, suggesting that certain implementation characteristics are likely to produce more positive outcomes. We also identified a study in Texas, currently ongoing and funded

by NIJ, which is focused on testing whether certain implementation characteristics produce more positive outcomes than programs not using these characteristics.

Based on this literature and the expertise of leading practitioners in the field, the following implementation characteristics should be adopted, studied, tested, and refined as a programmatic framework for implementing school policing programs.

Clearly Define the Purpose of the Policing Program and Who Is Responsible for It

The school district and police agency (if contracting for SROs) should clearly define the purpose for putting police in schools, including what they will be doing and what they will not be doing. This definition should be included in all documents and communication.

The school district and police agency should also identify who is responsible for the policing program's implementation and monitoring. If contracting for SROs, both the police agency and school district should clearly state in their formal agreement who is the primary point of contact for the program in both agencies. If the program is being run solely by the school district, it should be clearly identified who has oversight over the policing program.

Develop a Detailed Governance Document

A clear and complete governing document should be developed prior to program implementation. Such a document can be useful both when officers are contracted from a local police agency (i.e., the SRO model) and when officers are employed by the school system directly (i.e., the school-based law enforcement model). This type of document is often referred to as a memorandum of understanding, interlocal agreement, or intergovernmental agreement when contracting officers from a local police agency. As several have noted, including Rosiak (2020a), the development of a guiding document such as this is critical to the operation of a school policing program.

This document should not only lay out guidelines for how officers will work within a school or set of schools (e.g., the method of payment, the number of officers to be assigned to the school district, what campuses the officers are responsible for, the period when officers will be made available to the school district), but also describe in detail the roles, training, and evaluation of the program. The document should include a clear distinction between crime and discipline and stipulate that officers are not responsible for school discipline. The elements of this agreement should be clearly communicated to school staff, including administrators and teachers, as well as the community.

Select the Right Officers for the Job

Although it is a subject not widely referenced in the academic literature, practitioners have noted how important it is to select the right officers to work in a school setting. They may not be the best patrol officers, but those who have the skills and demeanor to work in a school setting and fulfill the specific roles and activities identified. More research and focus need to be dedicated to identifying what personal characteristics and selection criteria should be used for officers in a school setting. Selecting the right officer for a school assignment also means adapting the assessment and evaluation of that officer's work to ensure they align with those expectations.

Establish Annual Goals and Expectations for the Policing Program

Each year, the policing program should have clear and achievable goals that are developed collectively between school administrators and officers with input from the community and other stakeholders. These goals should be shared with all involved in the program's implementation. Based on these goals, the officer's roles, duties, and activities should be established and communicated to the campus community. This will result in a clearer understanding of what the purpose of the program is and which areas the officer can and should be supporting, as well as areas that may not be appropriate for law enforcement involvement.

Provide Program-Specific Training

Officers and school staff should be trained for their specific duties and activities to reach the established goals in the school setting. As noted earlier, some states have adopted statewide training programs for officers who will be working in schools. Although this type of training may have a place and purpose, it should only serve as a basic foundation for working in a school.

Because communities and school systems will differ vastly on what they would like to achieve with their policing programs, it is unlikely that statewide training will be effective at meeting the needs of all districts and officers in a state. Individual school policing programs should identify their own specific goals, and training must be mapped to the roles and activities the officers will be asked to engage in to support these focus areas. Training should be ongoing throughout the course of the officer's time working in the school.

In addition, school staff (including administrators) and others who will intersect with the policing program in the educational setting should also receive training. School staff should be taught about the purpose of the policing program and what officers will and will not do during their work on campus. When possible, school staff and officers should train together.

Collect Data To Assess Progress Toward Goals and Evaluate the Program

Prior to program implementation, data sources should be identified that can be used to assess progress toward the program's goals. The data should be regularly examined throughout program implementation to help ensure that the program stays focused on established goals and that the goals can be critically examined. To be successful, the use of police in schools must be treated as a program that needs to be assessed regularly to determine whether it is meeting its intended outcomes. Often, school policing is implemented and then forgotten about. The regular assessment of policing in schools will allow for goals, training, and expected outcomes to be examined on a regular basis.

Regularly Assess the Program and Adjust as Needed

As the program progresses, the district and campuses should regularly review progress toward the identified goals. If needed, adjustments to goals, duties, and activities should be made based on the data being collected. If additional training is needed for officers or staff, it should be provided. Regular assessment and refinement of the program is a critical piece in ensuring the program stays on track and in line with the expected outcomes and vision of the community.

Future research should move beyond the debate over SRO versus school-based models of school policing, focusing instead on implementation characteristics that show evidence of contributing to successful programs. Establishing and implementing characteristics such as those mentioned above allow for flexibility and local decision-making, while also building commonalities across programs that will increase their potential for success. For practitioners, this focus should result in more stable and consistent programs. History tells us that the roles and activities of officers will continue to change and expand, but if we identify and study characteristics of programs that result in success, these characteristics should stabilize across time. Ultimately, the focus should be less on roles and activities, and more on implementation. This approach allows for more flexibility in terms of what a specific school needs from its program.

From a research perspective, the existence of comparison groups that are constant on some structural variables will allow for much more rigorous studies to be conducted. This will open the door for better identification of other areas, such as officer roles and specific activities, that might result in positive or negative outcomes for schools and students. At that point, research can move past the common evaluation and impact studies that compare campuses with police to those without to make conclusions about various school and student outcomes based on specific program elements. Not examining or controlling for key structural elements of the program like those mentioned above leaves questions as to the validity of the conclusions.

Overall, our recommendations focus on what we can do now to ensure current programs meet the desired outcomes for staff and students in schools across the country, as well as how we can continue to advance the body of work focused on evaluating the impacts of these programs. We cannot ignore that current literature examining the impacts of school policing programs generally paints a bleak picture in terms of success. However, there are several areas that have been largely unaddressed in the existing body of impact studies on school policing, but have been highlighted by those in the field as key elements that make for a successful program.

Moving forward, it will be critical to consider the many factors and variables that must be examined to adequately make large-scale generalizations regarding all school policing programs across the country. We must continue to develop school policing programs and rigorously test them to ensure the best possible outcomes for schools and students.

Conclusion

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) was directed to provide Congress with a report on the state of school policing in the United States. To address this directive, NIJ engaged two consultants to conduct a comprehensive literature review and examination of data sources, facilitate four days of expert panel discussions, and synthesize the results from these data collection efforts.

At the time of the directive in 2019, school policing was, by all accounts, increasing rapidly across the United States. This was fueled, at least in part, by concerns about active shooters and mass shootings, with 2018 a witness to two high-casualty events at American high schools. The federal government continues to support the implementation of school policing through grant programs, and many commissions and task forces have recommended greater access to policing to increase school safety. Yet despite the growth and popularity of school policing, the research conducted to this point has not evidenced positive results. Indeed, some research indicates possible harmful effects, especially for students belonging to racial and ethnic minorities.

As we continued our work on this report, May 2020 brought protests and civil unrest around the world, along with increased scrutiny of racial bias across all areas of society. Naturally, this scrutiny was most focused on how the justice system is experienced differently by people of different racial and ethnic groups, and especially on how the police interact with communities of color. This has extended beyond municipal police to the presence of police in schools. Since May 2020, several districts in the United States have undergone deliberations about whether to maintain a police presence in their schools, and some local jurisdictions have opted to remove or reduce police presence (Petrosino, Fronius, & Taylor, 2020). This report contains no mandate to local communities and school districts about what they should do regarding school police. The decision to adopt, increase, reduce, or remove school police is a local decision. One conclusion, offered by many in the research community based on the research to date, is that school policing is a failed intervention that schools and districts should not be using. Another conclusion, offered by many in the

practice and policy community, is that good school policing programs can provide benefits to students, staff, and the school community — but these programs need to be implemented properly to increase safety and build trusting relationships, regardless of the community in which they are employed.

Our recommendations are borne out of these two ironies: (1) the popularity and growth of school policing, and the lack of research evidence supporting its positive impacts and (2) the divide in perceptions about the merits of school policing between many in the research community who have concluded that it is an unsupported intervention, and many in the policy and practice community who continue to see benefits from these programs. We recognize that some local jurisdictions, concerned about having police in schools, will choose to eliminate them or reduce their role. But other local jurisdictions will continue their programs, or even expand them. Those local jurisdictions that adopt, continue, and expand school policing should exercise caution in implementation. Any school district or local community that puts officers into its schools without attending to concerns such as selection, training, and officer and educator roles is likely to create an ineffective program at best, and a potentially harmful one at worst.

Our recommendations are designed to help federal, state, and local jurisdictions make more informed choices. At the federal level, we recommend targeted and consistent funding — not only by NIJ — to support a stronger knowledge base about school policing. This includes more funding of randomized controlled trials and rigorous quasi-experiments. At the state and local levels, we urge greater attention to the selection and training of officers and careful delineation of roles, all with some flexibility for adaptation to meet local community needs. All communities implementing school policing need to attend to implementation characteristics that improve the opportunities for program success and reduce the probability of harm.

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Appendices

Appendix A. List of NIJ School Policing Meeting Series Attendees

Nonfederal:

Lynn Addington American University	**Aaron Kupchik** University of Delaware
Kenneth Anderson Howard University	**Brian Lande** Richmond Police Department
Ronald Applin Atlanta Public Schools	**Kathy Martinez-Prather** Texas School Safety Center
Michelle Archer Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Police Department	**David May** Mississippi State University
Stacy Avila "I Love U Guys" Foundation	**Joseph McKenna** School Safety Solutions
Ivan Benitez University of Louisville	**Lisa Patierne** Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Central School District
Mo Canady National Association of School Resource Officers	**Rudy Perez** Los Angeles School Police Department
F. Chris Curran University of Florida	**Anthony Petrosino** WestEd
Deanna Devlin Farmingdale State College	**Richard Renaud** Texas State University
Dorothy Espelage University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	**Trisha Rhodes** University of Arkansas at Little Rock
Benjamin Fisher University of Louisville	**Moses Robinson** Rochester City School District
Naomi Goldstein Drexel University	**John Rosiak** Prevention Partnerships
Denise Gottfredson University of Maryland	**Mario Scalora** University of Nebraska
Bryon Gustafson American River College	**Timothy Servoss** Canisius College
Cresean Hughes University of Delaware	**Lucy Sorensen** The State University of New York at Albany
John-Michael Keyes "I Love U Guys" Foundation	**Jenny Walker** Arizona Department of Education

Federal:

Mary Carlton National Institute of Justice	**Matthew Scheider** Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
Nadine P. Frederique National Institute of Justice	**Kevin Scott** Bureau of Justice Statistics
Mark Morgan National Institute of Justice	**Elizabeth Simpson** Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
David Muhlhausen National Institute of Justice	**Sherran Thomas** National Institute of Justice
Jessica Norton National Institute of Justice	**Phelan Wyrick** National Institute of Justice

Appendix B. List of CSSI-Funded Projects With a Focus on School Policing

FY 2014 Awards

■ Study of Police in Schools, *Westat*

■ Survey of Law Enforcement Personnel in Schools (SLEPS), *Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics*

■ School Safety and Climate Study, Brevard Public Schools, *University of Central Florida*

■ Effective School Staff Interactions With Students and Police: A Training Model, *Connecticut Office of Policy and Management*

■ School Resource Officer Activities and Training To Improve School Climate & Student Safety Outcomes, *Arizona Department of Education, University of Arizona*

FY 2015 Awards

■ Comprehensive Approaches to Addressing Mental Health Needs and Enhancing School Security: A Cluster Randomized Controlled Trial, *Michigan State University*

■ A Multiple Perspectives Analysis of the Influences on the School-to-Prison Pipeline in Virginia, *Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University*

■ Coping Power in the City: Promoting Safety and Coping Skills in Baltimore City High Schools, *Baltimore City Public Schools*

■ Comprehensive School Safety in Atlanta Public Schools, *WestEd*

■ A Cluster Randomized Controlled Trial of the Safe Public Spaces in Schools Program, *American Institutes for Research*

FY 2016 Awards

■ Rainier Beach Campus Safety Continuum: A Comprehensive Place Based Approach, *George Mason University*

■ A Randomized Controlled Trial of a Comprehensive, Research-Based Framework for Implementing School-Based Law Enforcement Programs, *Texas State University*

■ Shelby County School District Comprehensive Safety Initiative, *Research Triangle Institute*

■ Mapping Decision Points From School Based Incidents to Exclusionary Discipline, Arrest, and Referral to the Juvenile Justice System, *National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges*

■ School Climate, Student Discipline, and the Implementation of School Resources Officers, *University of Louisville Research Foundation*

■ Reducing Exclusionary Discipline and Ensuring School Safety, *The Urban Institute*

■ Understanding the Adoption, Function, and Consequences of School Resource Officer Use in Understudied Settings, *University of Maryland, Baltimore County*

■ The Influence of Subjective and Objective Rural School Security on Law Enforcement Engagement Models: A Mixed Methods Study, *University of Nebraska-Lincoln*

■ Assessing a School, Justice, and Behavioral Health Collaborative Approach to Improving School Safety, *Policy Research Associates, Inc.*

■ An Investigation of School Resource and Safety Programs Policy and Practice in Virginia, *Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University*

FY 2017 Awards

■ Enhancing School Resource Officers' Effectiveness Through Online Professional and Job Embedded Coaching, *University of Florida-Gainesville*

■ Evaluating Impacts of the Philadelphia Police School Diversion Program: An Alternative to Arrest Policing Strategy, *Drexel University*

■ Evaluating Promising School, Staff, and Resource-Officer Approaches for Reducing Harsh Discipline, Suspensions, and Arrests, *University of Maryland, Baltimore County*

■ Improvement of School Climate Assessment in Virginia Secondary Schools, *University of Virginia*

Appendix C. Overview of School Police Definitions, Certification Requirements, and Training Requirements

State	Definition of School Police	Certification Requirements	Training
Alabama	A law enforcement officer employed by a law enforcement agency who is specifically selected and specially trained for the school setting. School resource officers are permitted to carry a deadly weapon.	Annual firearm requalification	Active shooter training
Alaska	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
Arizona	*Acknowledges school resource officers in legislation, but no statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
Arkansas	A law enforcement officer tasked with assisting with school security, safety, emergency preparedness, emergency response, or any other responsibility assigned to the school resource officer by the school or law enforcement agency.	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*
California	Officer employed to provide safety and protect persons and property and report unlawful activity.	Background and fingerprint check; must not be prohibited from working for school district and the Department of Justice or carrying a gun if required to	Firearm training and training approved by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training regarding school resource officers
Colorado	Peace officer who has specialized training, assigned to a school to create a safe learning environment and respond to all-hazard threats.	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	Training curriculum approved by the Colorado Peace Officer Standards and Training Board
Connecticut	A retired police officer employed to provide security services in a public school.	Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection license	Training curriculum approved by the state Police Officer Standards and Training Council
Delaware	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	Age 21 or older and must take a Delaware constitutional oath	Awareness training from their school district; training on disability awareness and behaviors, de-escalation techniques in a school setting, information on intervention decisions, and other necessary training
District of Columbia	Sworn officer who works in collaboration with community to prevent crime, address disorder, and ensure safety.	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	School Safety Division training covers child development; effective communication skills; behavior management; conflict resolution; substance abuse and its effect on youth; availability of social services for youth; District of Columbia laws and regulations, including Board of Education regulations; constitutional standards for searches and seizures conducted by school security personnel on school grounds; and gang and crew violence prevention.

Appendix C. Overview of School Police Definitions, Certification Requirements, and Training Requirements (continued)

State	Definition of School Police	Certification Requirements	Training
Florida	Certified officer hired and employed by a local emergency agency.	Criminal background checks, drug testing, psychological evaluation, and must be certified law enforcement officers	School resource officers must complete mental health crisis intervention training. The training shall improve officers' knowledge and skills as first responders to incidents involving students with emotional disturbance or mental illness, including de-escalation skills to ensure student and officer safety.
Georgia	Peace officer whose main employment consists of working in primary and secondary schools.	High school diploma or equivalent, no criminal record, stable mental health, good moral character, academy training	Peace officer training based on level of school and how to interact with students
Hawaii	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
Idaho	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
Illinois	A law enforcement officer who has been primarily assigned to a school or school district under an agreement with a local law enforcement agency.	Certificate of completion for Illinois Law Enforcement Training standards	The Illinois Law Enforcement Training Standards Board is required to develop a course for school resource officers in consultation with organizations demonstrating expertise or experience in the areas of youth and adolescent developmental issues, educational administrative issues, prevention of child abuse and exploitation, youth mental health treatment, and juvenile advocacy.
Indiana	An officer employed by a law enforcement agency who is assigned to one or more schools to assist with the development and implementation of the school safety plan, protect against outside threats, prevent unauthorized access to school property, and secure schools against violence and natural disasters.	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	At least 40 hours of school resource officer training, including training regarding skills, tactics, and strategies necessary to address the special nature of school campuses and school building security needs and characteristics
Iowa	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
Kansas	A law enforcement officer employed by a law enforcement agency and assigned to a district through an agreement between the local law enforcement agency and the district.	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	Skill development training course developed by the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center
Kentucky	A sworn law enforcement officer with specialized training to work with youth at a school site.	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	Specialized training for working in schools

Appendix C. Overview of School Police Definitions, Certification Requirements, and Training Requirements (continued)

State	Definition of School Police	Certification Requirements	Training
Louisiana	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	Certified by a nationally accredited school resource officer program, or by a state school resource officer training program certified by the Council on Peace Officer Standards and Training	The Council on Peace Officer Standards and Training shall develop and implement a School Violence Prevention Training Program.
Maine	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
Maryland	A law enforcement officer assigned to a school in accordance with a memorandum of understanding between a law enforcement agency and the local education agency.	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	Training curriculum must include de-escalation, disability awareness, maintaining a positive school climate, constructive interactions with students, and implicit bias and disability and diversity awareness with specific attention to racial and ethnic disparities.
Massachusetts	A municipal police officer with all necessary training and up-to-date certificates, or a special officer charged with providing law enforcement and security services to elementary and secondary public schools.	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	The chief shall give preference to candidates who have received specialized training relating to working with adolescents and children, including cognitive development, de-escalation techniques, and alternatives to arrest and diversion strategies.
Michigan	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
Minnesota	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
Mississippi	A police officer tasked with teaching law, law enforcement, and mentoring.	Age 23 or older, with at least three years of law enforcement experience	Any officer assigned to perform school security must complete a training course designated by the Mississippi Department of Education and Mississippi Board of Law Enforcement Standards and Training within two years of appointment.
Missouri	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	40 hours of basic training, including law enforcement in school settings, intruder training, and juvenile law
Montana	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
Nebraska	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
Nevada	A deputy sheriff or other peace officer employed by a local law enforcement agency and assigned to duty at one or more schools. The officer's responsibilities include providing guidance and information to pupils, families, and educational personnel concerning the avoidance and prevention of crime.	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*

Appendix C. Overview of School Police Definitions, Certification Requirements, and Training Requirements (continued)

State	Definition of School Police	Certification Requirements	Training
New Hampshire	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
New Jersey	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	The Police Training Commission must develop a training course that includes the protection of students from harassments, intimidation, and bullying; threat and risk assessment; and counterterrorism.
New Mexico	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
New York	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	Collaborative arrangements between school districts and law enforcement agencies to assure adequate training
North Carolina	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
North Dakota	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
Ohio	A peace officer appointed through a memorandum of understanding between a law enforcement agency and a school district to provide services to a school district or school.	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	Trained to address school campuses; school building security needs and characteristics; the nuances of law enforcement functions conducted inside a school environment, including understanding the psychological and physiological characteristics consistent with the ages of the students, understanding the appropriate role of school resource officers regarding discipline and reducing the number of referrals to juvenile court, and understanding the use of developmentally appropriate interview, interrogation, de-escalation, and behavior management strategies; the mechanics of being a positive role model for youth; providing assistance on topics such as classroom management tools to provide law-related education to students and methods for managing the behaviors sometimes associated with educating children with special needs; the mechanics of the laws regarding compulsory attendance; identifying the trends in drug use; and eliminating the instance of drug use.

Appendix C. Overview of School Police Definitions, Certification Requirements, and Training Requirements (continued)

State	Definition of School Police	Certification Requirements	Training
Oklahoma	A police reference officer employed by a law enforcement agency who is assigned to one or more schools to assist the school safety specialist with the development and implementation of the school safety plan, protect against outside threats, prevent unauthorized access to school property, and secure schools against violence and natural disasters.	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*
Oregon	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
Pennsylvania	A school police officer is a law officer employed by a school district whose responsibilities are established by the school district. A school resource officer is a law enforcement officer employed by a law enforcement agency whose duty station is located in a school entity and whose stationing is established by an agreement between the law enforcement agency and the school entity.	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	A school police officer who has been authorized to carry a firearm must successfully complete training relating to municipal police education or have graduated from the Pennsylvania State Police Academy and have been employed as a state trooper with the Pennsylvania State Police.
Rhode Island	A career law enforcement officer with sworn authority employed by a police department to work in collaboration with one or more schools.	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	40 hours of specialized training in school policing administered by an accredited agency before being assigned
South Carolina	A sworn law enforcement officer who has completed the basic course of instruction for school resource officers and who is assigned to one or more school districts to act as a law enforcement officer, advisor, and teacher for that school district.	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	Basic training for school resource officers
South Dakota	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
Tennessee	A law enforcement officer assigned to a school in accordance with a memorandum of understanding between the chief of the appropriate law enforcement agency and the local education agency.	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	40 hours of basic training in school policing within 12 months of assignment to a school, followed by annual participation in a minimum of 16 hours of training specific to school policing
Texas	A peace officer assigned to provide a police presence at a public school, safety or drug education to students of a public school, or other similar services.	School resource officers at a school district with 30,000 or more students must obtain a school-based law enforcement proficiency certificate within 120 days of the officer's commission or placement. The applicant must participate in a course to receive the certificate.	The model training curriculum for school district peace officers must incorporate learning objectives regarding child and adolescent development and psychology, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, de-escalation and limiting use of force, and mental health and behavioral needs.

Appendix C. Overview of School Police Definitions, Certification Requirements, and Training Requirements (continued)

State	Definition of School Police	Certification Requirements	Training
Utah	A law enforcement officer who contracts with, or whose law enforcement agency contracts with, a local education agency to provide law enforcement services. The officer shall be a positive role model, work to create a problem-solving partnership with the school, and use restorative practices.	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	The State Board of Education training program may include training on childhood and adolescent development; responding age-appropriately to students, working with disabled students, techniques to de-escalate and resolve conflict, cultural awareness, restorative justice practices, identifying a student exposed to violence or trauma and referring the student to appropriate resources, student privacy rights, negative consequences associated with youth involvement in the juvenile and criminal justice systems, strategies to reduce juvenile justice involvement, and the roles of and distinctions between a school resource officer and other school staff who help keep a school secure.
Vermont	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
Virginia	A certified law enforcement officer hired by the local law enforcement agency to provide law enforcement and security services to Virginia public elementary and secondary schools.	Background investigation, high school diploma, age 21 or older, possession of a valid driver's license, first aid training	Training includes roles and responsibilities of school security, security awareness, and conflict resolution, as well as firearms and active shooter training for those carrying a firearm.
Washington	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
West Virginia	Certified police officers assigned to work full time within a public school during the school year. Duties, salary, and other conditions are determined through an agreement with the county board of education and authorized police department.	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing in this area*
Wisconsin	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		
Wyoming	*No statutory or regulatory language found related to school policing*		

Note: Information collected from Education Commission of the States, https://reports.ecs.org/comparisons/k-12-school-safety-04.

Appendix D. General Theory of Change for Policing Schools Strategies

Anticipated "Policing Schools" Strategies

- Police patrol presence
- School resource officers
- Police-school liaisons
- Safe routes/corridors
- Community policing/problem-oriented policing

Immediate Outputs

- Increased police presence/surveillance at or around schools
- More interaction with students and staff

Anticipated Immediate Benefits

- Deter student and staff misbehavior
- Students, staff, and parents feel safer
- Gather intelligence to diffuse or proactively deal with situations
- Provide information to students and staff
- Develop positive relationships with youth
- Develop positive relationships with schools

Possible Unintended Negative Consequences

- More students are arrested for misconduct normally handled informally
- More students are pushed out of the traditional K-12 educational setting, particularly racial and ethnic minorities and youth with disabilities
- Presence of police increases student, staff, and parent fear
- School climate is more negative and tense

Anticipated Longer-Term Benefits

- Reductions in crime in and around schools
- Reductions of noncriminal student misbehavior such as bullying and harassment
- School climate improves
- Students and staff miss less time from school (attendance improves)
- Students and staff perceive their schools more positively
- Grades and test scores improve

Adopted from: Petrosino, A., Guckenburg, S. and Fronius, T. 2014. Protocol for a systematic review: Policing schools strategies to reduce crime, increase perceptions of safety, and improve learning outcomes in primary and secondary schools. *Campbell Systematic Reviews,* 10: 1-34. https://doi.org/10.1002/CL2.131.

Appendix E. Databases Searched for Impact Study Review

Academic Search Premiere
American Periodical Series
California Peace Officers Standards and Training Law Enforcement Archives
Cochrane Library: Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials
Criminal Justice Abstracts
EBSCO Educational Administration Abstracts
EBSCO Masterfile
EBSCO Social Index
EconLit Abstracts
Education Resources Information Center (ERIC)
Education Full Text
Family and society studies
Google search for "(evaluation or study or quasi-experiment) and (police or enforcement) and (school or campus)"
Google search for "(evaluation or study or quasi-experiment or experimental) and (police or enforcement) and (college or university)"
Google Scholar
Homeland Security Digital Library
International Bibliography of the Social Sciences
JSTOR
Medline Abstracts
National Bureau of Economic Research Working Papers
National Criminal Justice Reference Service
Policy Archive
ProQuest Dissertations
Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection
Psychological Abstracts (PsycInfo)
Public Affairs Information Services (PAIS)
Race Relations
Sage Criminology Full Text
Social Services Abstracts
Social Work Abstracts
Sociological Abstracts
SSRN Electronic Library
Urban Studies Abstracts
Worldwide Political Abstracts